THE WOMEN OF THE MIDDLE KINGDOM

R · L · McNABB

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The Women of the Middle Kingdom

Dr. Hü King Eng.

THE WOMEN OF THE MIDDLE KINGDOM

By

R. L. McNABB, A. M.

Formerly Missionary in China

CINCINNATI: JENNINGS AND PYE
NEW YORK: EATON AND MAINS

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Dedication

TO THE
WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY
WORKERS OF ALL ORTHODOX CHURCHES,
WHO ARE LABORING FOR THE UPLIFTING
AND CHRISTIANIZATION OF THE WOMEN
OF CHINA, THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED

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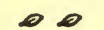
PREFACE.



In this little volume an attempt is made to describe the condition of the women of China; many of their peculiar customs, both social and religious, are explained; and the earnest and successful efforts of lady missionaries in China are described. The ripe fruit of missionary work is illustrated by giving a biographical sketch of a "Christian Chinese Lady," Mrs. Sia Ahok. That the reader may appreciate the possibilities of pagan womanhood at its best, a description is given of that remarkable woman, the Dowager Empress of China.

In preparing this work the author has not only drawn from his own observations and investigations in China, but has searched through many books on *things Chinese* written by various authors, in order to find facts that would illustrate the subjects under discussion. Credit is given to these authors in the

body of this book. Names of individual missionaries are not given, for time and space would fail me if I undertook to describe the work of each missionary heroine. For the sake of clearness, and in order to make each chapter as independent as possible of every other chapter, a few facts have been used more than once in the preparation of this volume.

R. L. McNabb.

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The Women of the Middle Kingdom.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRIALS OF THEIR CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

The Chinese, unless talking with foreigners, never call their country China. Multiplied millions of the interior population of that vast country have never heard the term. About 250 B. C. the great Tsin (Chin) Dynasty ruled that country. The people of India spoke of China as "The land of the Tsin Dynasty." When the Romanists entered India they Latinized the word Tsin, making it Tsina or China. Thus the "Western world" came to know the land of Confucius by the name China.

Cathay, which was derived from Ki-tah, the name of an emperor who ruled in the tenth century, is another name that foreigners apply to China. It may be called the poetic name, for Western poets,

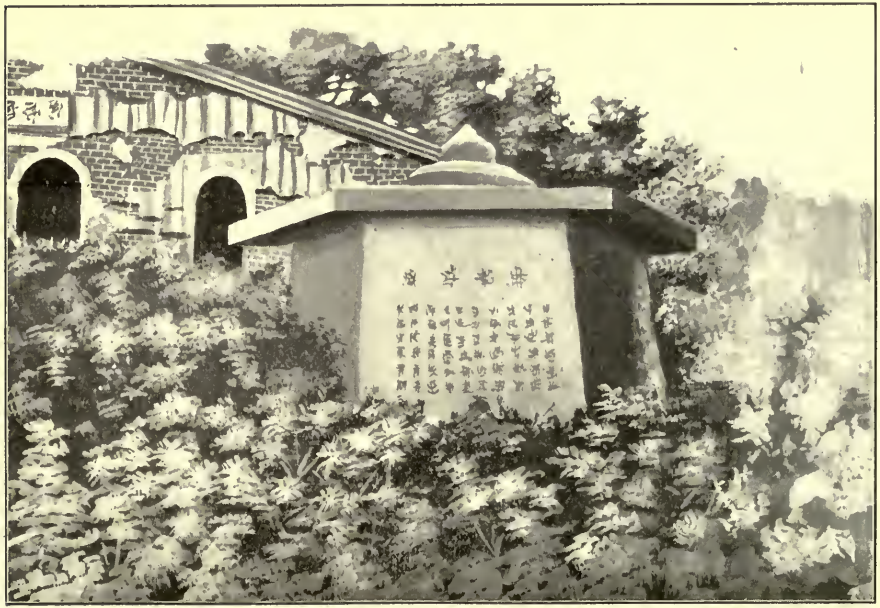
when they sing of that land, call it "Far Cathay." But the Chinese never use the name.

The "Celestial Empire" is a name that is sometimes used by Chinese as well as by foreigners, and is derived from "Teen Chow," meaning "Celestial Dynasty." As applied to that country it means the "kingdom which the dynasty appointed by heaven rules." Southern China is emphatically "the Land of Flowers." Every kind of flowering plant or tree that I have ever seen, from the tiny pansy to the majestic "Beauty of India" (a tree as large as our forest trees, that has a beautiful bright pink flower), grows in that semi-tropical region. Hence that country is frequently called the "Land of Flowers."

China's sacred or classical name is "Chung-Kwok," "Middle Kingdom." A Chinese map of the world would represent China as the center of all things earthly, with the United States, England, and other lands as small islands clustering around the coasts of that "Middle Land."

Dr. S. Wells Williams, who has doubtless written the greatest work on China, gave that work the title, "The Middle Kingdom."

Out of this list of names "The Middle Kingdom" is doubtless the most appropriate one for a book that describes that strange land. Hence "The



THE BABY TOWER.

Women of the Middle Kingdom" is the best name for a book that gives an account of the women of that country.

When the girl baby first opens her quaint little eyes in a Chinese home—be it a hut or palace—she is greeted with a frown. No one in the household is made happy by her advent. She is, like her Redeemer, despised and rejected of men. Her swaddling clothes may become her burial clothes, for infanticide is a common practice in China. Her father may cast her into some baby tower, where birds may come and feast upon her flesh. She may find a watery grave in a neighboring river whose pitiless waves hush forever her child-cry. She may be buried alive in the mud floor of the dark and dingy room where she was born. As sad as the custom of infanticide is in China, it is no worse than it was in India or other heathen countries with the possible exception of Japan. If a Western person reproves a Chinaman for this crime, he may retort by saying, "It is no worse to kill the child after it is born than before, and there is no risk to the mother's life."

To what extent infanticide prevails is hard to determine. The statement that is going the rounds of the newspapers that seventy-five per cent of the

children of China are killed at birth is false. Boys are seldom if ever put to death. After there are two or more girls born to one father and mother the girl babies that come to life in that family may soon be put to death.

Orphanages and foundling homes have been established by the missionaries into which many waifs have been gathered. A native Christian doctor was present when an infant girl was born to heathen parents, who were anxious for the advent of a son. The angry grandfather seized the child and threw it into the back yard. The Christian doctor rescued the child, and took it to the orphanage. The cruel parents refused to grant the doctor anything in which to wrap the little outcast. Many of these little ones have been rescued. Raised under the fostering care of Christian matrons, and educated in the mission schools, they become the wives of native Christian ministers and laymen, teachers in day-schools, or Bible-readers in the secluded female departments of Chinese homes. If the little creature is allowed to stay in the home of her parents she is treated as an intruder, and is not considered as a member of the family. She is considered as a member of her future husband's family. If asked the number of his children, her father will give

the exact number of his boys, but will not mention his daughters. If he happens to have no sons, he will say in the most pathetic tone of voice, so as to stir the sympathy of the inquirer, "I have one insignificant girl." She is not only an unmentionable article, but she may be an unnamed article in the household. She may be just numbered. An old woman who used to come to carry away the kitchen refuse with which to feed her pigs was called "thirteen." That was the only name she had. She was the thirteenth girl that was allowed to live among her grandfather's descendants.

If the girl is allowed to live, an uncertain fate awaits her. She may be sold to be a bondmaid of some small-footed occupant of the inner apartments of a wealthy mandarin. When she reaches a marriageable age, the mandarin in whose family she has been a slave is obliged to sell her to become a wife of some lowly laborer, thus changing the form of her bondage, but still leaving her, in a sense, a slave. She may be kidnaped by bad men and sold into a life of shame. Wicked men of the Occident pay these kidnapers handsome prices for Chinese girls. Many of them are kept in the foreign communities of China. Others of these helpless creatures are sent to Australia, Singapore, and

America, to become the slaves of licentious wretches. This crime prevails to such an alarming extent among the foreigners in China that the *North China Herald* (which is not by any means a missionary journal) says:

"Almost daily girls are enticed to Shanghai and sold like so many sheep and cattle. The girls are taught to play the native guitar, to sing, and lead a shameful life. Rods, whips, and burning hot opium-needles are used to torture these creatures in order to make them show off their accomplishments. Were a record of the brutal treatment of these girls made known, the world would be shocked. This would not be allowed in the Chinese city, but in the foreign part of the city it prevails to an alarming extent."

The Chinese *Recorder and Missionary Journal* says: "It is true that there are sinks of iniquity in Shanghai; places where the worst of vices are openly flaunted, such as would not be tolerated in the adjoining heathen city." Remember it is the foreign part of Shanghai that is referred to and not the native city, and also remember that both the newspapers quoted are foreign papers and not Chinese.

This state of affairs is not confined to Shanghai,

for nearly every foreign community is in the same condition in a less or greater degree. Many a Chinese girl is sold by her parents with the distinct understanding that she is to go to America to become the wife of a rich Chinese merchant; but when she reaches her destination she finds she is in the clutches of a human monster, and is compelled to eke out an existence that is worse than death. The price of girls varies according to their age and use to which they are put. The price of a bondmaid is about two dollars for each year of her age. A girl twelve years old was sold at Foochow for forty thousand cash (about thirty-six dollars in silver). If a girl is to lead a life of degradation she will bring a price two or three times as high as a bondslave. Chinese parents are generally unwilling on any consideration to sell their daughters for such a career. When the girl is bought with the understanding that she is to be a bondmaid, and is then put into a life of shame, the perpetrators of the crime are liable to be severely punished by the magistrate.

If a Chinese girl escapes these dangers and remains in her father's home, and finally becomes the wife of some Chinese youth, yet is her life not to be desired by an Occidental lady. Confucius,

the great sage, teaches that she must be subject to the three obediences. While in her father's house she must obey him; when married she must obey her husband; and when her husband is dead she must obey her own son. Filial piety is so deeply impressed upon her mind that no self-torture is considered too great for her to bear that she may relieve her parents. If a Chinese doctor should intimate that a broth made from human flesh would restore her sick parent to health, she would not hesitate to sacrifice some of her own flesh for that purpose. A girl once tried to cut some of the flesh from the fleshy portion of her body with which to make a broth for her sick mother, but her courage failed her and she then cut and unjointed a portion of one of her fingers and made the broth. This act of filial piety was brought to the attention of the emperor, and he ordered that a stone arch or gateway should be erected to commemorate the deed.

Not one girl in a thousand is educated. Of what use is it to educate a creature whose chief end is to bear children, and who is supposed to spend her life in the inner apartments? Surely she is not worth educating. So reasons her more favored brother, father, or husband. Thus her

mind remains as cramped and undeveloped as do her bound feet.

The foot-binding custom is one of the singular and sad features of Chinese life. The boys do not have their feet bound. In South China the custom is mostly confined to the middle and upper classes. Even the poor are anxious to have one girl with bound feet, to keep up the standing of the family. As a rule, the farmers and the other laboring classes do not bind the feet of their daughters; for the female is expected to perform manual labor, and if her feet are bound her usefulness will be interfered with. In North China the women of all classes bind their feet; but the feet of the laboring women are not bound so small as to interfere much with their work. Manchu-Tartar ladies, Hakka (a nomadic class of people) women, secondary wives, bondmaids, and courtesans, as a rule, have large feet. Thus the bound feet of a Chinese lady indicate her standing in society. They indicate that she is not a Tartar, a nomadic Hakka, a secondary wife, or a bondslave. Her brothers and husband manifest great pride in her tiny feet, and call them "golden lilies." If a rude Chinaman were asked why the feet of the women were bound, he would say, "To keep them from gadding about." A

Chinese gentleman would doubtless answer such a question as follows: "Many centuries ago when there was a native dynasty upon the throne, an empress was born with naturally deformed or club feet. She was ashamed of her feet, and persuaded the emperor to require all the ladies admitted to the palace to have their feet bound to look like her feet." The process of foot-binding commences when the child is about five years old, and continues to the day of her death, unless she should happily become a Christian or come in touch, directly or indirectly, with the teachings of Christianity.

A long cotton bandage two or three inches wide is thrown over the four small toes, and they are drawn under and pressed up into the fleshy part of the foot. Being held in that position, they become stunted and cease to grow. The heel is drawn down and the center of the foot is pressed up until the instep bulges out in front of the ankle bone. The great toe is left out, and forms the acute angle of a triangle. The bandage is bound tightly about the foot in different directions. The sole of the shoe is made on the principle of an inclined plane of forty-five degrees. The heel rests on the back and the upper part of the incline, and the great toe goes into the shoe while the instep bulges out

Small Shoes worn by Bound-footed Women.

above the shoe. The large toe being all that goes into the shoe, the girl practically walks on her great toe. The process is painful, and sometimes the foot is injured to such an extent that it has to be taken off. When foreign ladies first commenced to go to China they laced themselves tightly and wore large hoop-skirts. When they talked to the Chinese women about the foot-binding custom, the Oriental lady would answer by saying that it was not as bad to bind the feet as the waist, for the Western woman in binding her waist injured her heart, lungs, and other internal organs. And as to the hoop-skirt, the Chinese lady said she could not understand why the foreign lady wore a chicken-coop under her gown.

This sad custom "is the mark of a Chinese lady, and indispensable to a suitable betrothal. Betrothal takes place very early in life, and a little girl whose feet are permitted to attain the usual (natural) size would not be chosen for the first or principal wife."

Bound feet are not a mark of wealth, but of gentility. This custom is one of the greatest obstacles to the spread of the gospel among the women of China. It is difficult for these crippled creatures to go about. Thus many of them are kept from

Church services. Then, when the girls and women become Christians, they are obliged to unbind their feet, and in this way break caste and injure their standing in society. This becomes a stumbling-block to many a woman of China, and she draws back and prefers to continue to be a hobbling and tinseled lady of leisure, to being a humble follower of the Christ.

CHAPTER II.

THEIR DRESS, WORK, AND AMUSEMENTS.

When it is finally decided that the Chinese girl-baby's life will be spared, she is wrapped in swaddling clothes, like her little Jewish sister, and tenderly laid beside her mother. When a month old her head is shaved, and she is clothed in a dress of bright red color. When she is four months old she is allowed to sit alone. A chair, prettily painted, gilded, and furnished with rollers, is prepared. The child, properly dressed, is seated in the chair, the seat of which has been well smeared with molasses candy, a gift from her maternal grandmother. The candy is intended to stick the child to the chair that she can the more easily learn to sit upright. On her first birthday a thank-offering, furnished by the maternal grandmother, is offered before the goddess of children called "Mother," who is supposed to have special care of children until they are sixteen years old. The girl also

receives some fine clothing, bracelets, and head ornaments from the maternal grandmother. After the first shaving of the head already referred to, all the head is kept shaved in summer (until the fifth year), except two tufts, which are allowed to grow, one on each side of the head; these are supposed to be charms, and are said to be conducive to health. This custom of head shaving is surely conducive to cleanliness, if not to health; for lice, which are altogether too numerous in China, are thus deprived of a harboring place. Among the extremely poor, the girls, as well as the boys, wear but little if any clothing in warm weather until they reach their seventh year. Some wear simply an apron-shaped pocket or cluster of pockets, such as a carpenter uses to carry nails in. Sometimes these pockets are beautifully embroidered. After the seventh year the girls wear garments that are so made as to show but little of the form of the body. Their clothing as a rule is becoming, neat, and exceedingly modest.

The two fundamental articles of dress for a woman are a pair of loose trousers and an equally loose-fitting tunic. A lady's trousers are exactly the same in shape as a man's. Although a woman is considered dressed when she has on trousers and

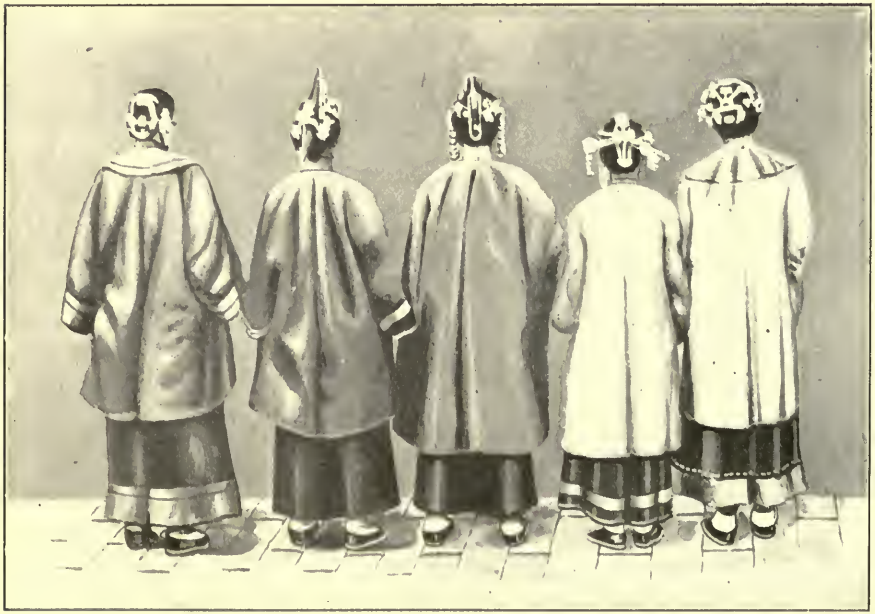
tunic, yet a lady of high standing always wears a thin innermost garment, that fits closely and is tightly buttoned up; while her outer garments vary in number and color according to the weather and her age. Girls usually wear brighter colors than women. A divided skirt is also very commonly worn. This has the trace of the trousers about it; "trousers unfinished," as it were, one piece hangs in front down to the ankles, as an apron, and another piece hangs behind in the same way; while embroidery and numerous plaits in vertical lines adorn them. A girdle of cord is worn about the waist, to which are fastened the lower undergarments. The laboring women wear black, while the indoor females usually wear blue dresses, made from grass-cloth and cotton. The well-to-do classes array themselves in embroidered dresses made of silk, satin, and crape. The dress fits tightly about the throat, has wide sleeves, that frequently expose the wrists and hands adorned with bracelets and rings.

The styles in dress change so slightly and so gradually that the superficial observer may not notice any change in fashion. About the only thing that has ever caused a complete change in styles of dress has been a change in dynasty, although,

in the course of twenty-five or thirty years, the sleeves may be noticed to be a little wider or a little narrower.

Two extreme classes alone wear hats, the large-footed laboring women and the women that are admitted to court society. The female coolies wear sun-hats, two or three feet in circumference, made of bamboo and coming to a point at the top. The hats of mountain women and girls are four or five feet in circumference. They are made of straw, have a hole in the center, and a veil hanging down all around the outer edge. These females wear their hair in one knot on the top of the head. The hole in the center of the hat is placed over the knot of hair and long hairpins are thrust through the knot, thus holding the hat in position on the head. The hats of the court ladies are of the same general style as those worn by their husbands. With the afore-mentioned exceptions the ladies never wear hats. The boat-women frequently tie a red handkerchief over their heads. A broad band, either plain or embroidered, is sometimes worn across the forehead in winter, to guard against intense cold. One writer says:

"In all ranks of society the hair of the women of China is always beautiful; it is always black,



How Hinghua Women Dress their Hair.

glossy, and luxuriant, arranged with taste and beauty, adorned with flowers, or often put in the shape of their favorite but fabulous bird—the Chinese phœnix—a long fold of rich dark hair reaching out behind the head, representing the tail, with two others extending from the side of the head, representing its extended wings, while another cluster gracefully bends over the forepart of the head, terminating in a bright metallic appendage, representing the bird's bill, which rests upon the forehead. In scarcely any grade of society is this beautiful ornament of the head found disheveled or neglected."

While the foregoing description is in the main correct, yet there are some styles of fixing the hair that are far from beautiful. The women of different prefectures arrange their hair differently, and a traveler can tell when he passes from one district to another by the way the women dress their raven locks. Girls always wear bangs. A great variety of hairpins is used, from a common metallic pin to costly gold pins ornamented with the sacred jadestone. Hairpins, it is said, were first used in China about three thousand years ago, during the Chow dynasty, and were made of bamboo wood. Ivory pins were first used about

651 B. C. Tortoise-shell pins came into use about 300 B. C. During the reign of the great Chi Huangte, 250 B. C., gold and silver hairpins became the fashion.

A daughter of China seemingly takes more pride in her ear-rings than any other portion of her toilet. Wire hoops, three or four inches in diameter, with a ball on one end, are a very common style of ear-ring. A cluster of gold or silver leaves, resembling different tree leaves, fastened neatly to a hook, forms another style. Still another style consists of an "eardrop" made of jade, ivory, pearl, silver, or gold. Finger-rings and breastpins are worn by all classes.

Possibly there is no nation that is so fond of fans as the Chinese. Palmleaf fans, bamboo fans, feather fans, paper fans, silk fans, fans large and fans small, fans of all shapes and texture, are used. Gigantic fans are carried by little slave girls as they accompany their mistresses when they make their fashionable visits. "The silk of which some of these fans are made is actually spun by the silkworm on the bamboo frame which surrounds the fans."

A deserted wife is spoken of figuratively as an "autumn fan," from the inscription written on a

fan, and sent to her royal master, by a lady of the court who found herself deserted by her lordly husband and cast away like a fan in autumn:

> "This silken fan then deign accept,
> Sad emblem of my lot,—
> Caressed and cherished for an hour,
> Then speedily forgot."

The tiny shoes of the bound-footed females are made of cloth—sometimes of beautifully embroidered silk or satin—the sole being of leather. The large-footed women have shoes with very thick white soles. They also wear socks instead of stockings. Many of the laboring women go barefooted or simply wear straw sandals.

The Chinese government undertakes to control the dress of its officers and their wives. Dr. Gray describes the dress that the law requires court women to wear as follows:

"A lady attending court wears a hat precisely similar in shape and texture to that worn by her husband on such occasions. The law distinctly states with regard to the winter costume, that the hat to be worn shall be covered with dark satin, and the inside lined with dark cloth. The brim is to be turned up, which gives it the appearance of what used to be known as the 'porkpie' hat.

The apex must be adorned with a tassel of red silk so long and so thick as to cover the entire top. . . . The summer hat is made either of fine straw or very thin strips of bamboo or rattan; the outside covered with very fine silk, with a tassel of red silk cords on the top. The border must not turn up. The rim must be covered with gold lace and the inside lined with red gauze.

"To the back of the hat are attached two long silk ribbons, which hang down over the shoulders. A simpler hat is occasionally worn. The outer and inner tunics are of the same length. From the back of the neck-band of the outer tunic two ribbons hang gracefully down. In front of her hat a duchess wears three gold ornaments. Around her neck is a purple satin scarf which hangs down in front. The front portion of the scarf has, in the center, a fringe of gold thread. Above this is a figure of a phœnix, and below it that of a dragon, embroidered in gold thread. Immediately above the fringe is fixed a large pearl.

"Three ear-rings are placed in the lobe of each ear, and from each ring hangs a valuable pearl. The outer tunic worn by a duchess is of purple satin, and has a deep border of gold. On the front of a tunic figures of two dragons are embroidered

in gold thread, and on the back a figure of one dragon only. From the back of the neck-band are suspended two long silk ribbons, on each of which are sewn several precious stones or pearls. The inner tunic is of blue silk, and has a deep border of gold adorned with precious stones. On the front of the inner tunic a figure of a dragon is embroidered in gold thread. On each side of the tunic figures of four, on each cuff a figure of one, and on each sleeve a figure of two dragons are embroidered. From the back of each neck-band of the inner tunic, two long ribbons are suspended, each of which is covered with pearls. The skirt worn by a duchess is of red satin. Upon it are embroidered in gold thread several figures of walking dragons."

The women of the upper classes have little more to do than to see that the household duties are not neglected by the slave girls. They also spend much time in making fancy embroidery and various kinds of needlework. Farmers' wives and daughters do as much of the field work as their husbands and brothers. Female burden-bearers go to the timber-clad hills and mountains, cut and bring home or take to market on their own shoulders from seventy-five to one hundred and twenty-five pounds of

wood. Everything is sold by the pound. Women scavengers are to be found in every city and village. Every tea-hong employs scores, if not hundreds, of female tea-pickers. Flowers, fruits, vegetables, candies, and nuts are carried from house to house by female hucksters. The boat-women and girls frequently man the smaller river crafts. Needle manufacturers employ girls to file, drill, polish, and sharpen needles. Mock money used for superstitious and religious purposes is mostly made by females. These laboring women board themselves, and get but from fifty to one hundred cash each day, or about two and one-half to five cents in American money.

The monotonous life of the females of the inner apartments, the toilsome existence of women of the common people, the abject drudgery of the slave girls, go on day after day, with few or no amusements to relieve the humdrum tide of affairs. An occasional visit from lady friends, a wedding, birthday, or religious festival—when females feast alone, unobserved by men—may add a bright spot now and then to the otherwise uneventful life of the high-class women. Sometimes groups of women may be seen at a theatrical performance in some temple court. Wealthy men, especially officers, on some

Native Women Grinding at the Mill.

special occasions, may engage a theatrical troupe to give a weeks' entertainment in the central court of the family home. This affords the imprisoned females a period of pleasure without appearing in public. No lady ever takes part in a theatrical performance. Boys dressed as females impersonate women and girls. Female burden-bearers will occasionally set down their loads near a theatrical platform in the village or city temple, and enjoy themselves for a moment in spite of the vulgar epithets hurled at them by rude men and boys. Puppet shows are at stated times held in front of the shrine of some goddess, or in the house court of some one of the gentry, for the especial entertainment of the gentler sex. Blind singing women are frequently seen in the large cities. "Toward the close of day numbers of blind women, neatly dressed and guided by aged women, may be seen traversing the streets. They are professional singers, and are invited into the houses and shops of the citizens where, for small sums, they will sing nearly the whole night long." This apparent anomaly in Chinese society of having public female singers, gives not only entertainment to the men in the shops, but the females of the household enjoy their singing in the reception rooms of the harems.

The seventh day of the Chinese New Year is a special holiday for ladies. They resort in large numbers to gardens and parks. They go in bands for mutual protection. Little footed women can be seen on that day, toddling along on their crippled appendages, supported by their female slaves. Sometimes the bondmaids carry their mistresses on their backs. This outing is greatly enjoyed by the fashionable prisoners of the inner female apartments.

Promiscuous dancing is unknown. The Chinese condemn unequivocally the mingling of the sexes as seen in the fashionable Western ball. Their condemnation of this curse of Occidental society is none too strong; but they have gone to the opposite extreme, and, by the absurd seclusion of respectable women, drive many men to seek female society in the company of a certain class, "who, in order to fit them for their life, are educated in music and taught such accomplishments as will render their society more acceptable."

CHAPTER III.

THEIR STATUS IN THE HOME AND SOCIETY.

THE position that woman occupies in China is far below that allotted to her in Christian lands, but it is above her position in India and many other heathen countries. The ancient sages of China taught that, after boys and girls reached the age of seven, "they should not occupy the same mat, nor eat together." Among the middle and upper classes the girls are not allowed to hang their clothes on the same pegs that their brothers do, nor may they use the same place to bathe in. The wife should not eat with her husband. Among the lower and poorer classes these non-essential customs are not observed. China's greatest teacher says: "Man is the representative of heaven, and is supreme in all things. On this account, woman can determine nothing for herself, and should be subject to the three obediences—to her father, husband, and son. Her business is to prepare food and

wine. Beyond the threshold of her own apartments she should not be known for evil or for good. If her husband die, she should not marry again."

Confucius's married life was a sad one. Some say he was divorced. His unhappy family relations seem to have embittered the life of womankind in China through succeeding generations. Having seemingly lost faith in the gentler sex, he consigns the wife to the position of a slave instead of a helpmeet for her husband. The necessity of having male progeny is the only reason he assigns for the marriage relations. If the first wife is not the mother of a son, the husband is justified, by Confucianism, in taking any number of secondary wives until a son is born. "Of all unfilial acts," says Mencius, "that is the most unfilial, to fail to be the father of a son." As a result of this teaching our almond-eyed sister has her homelife darkened with polygamy. Even though she is the primary wife, she is not the first woman of the household.

She may be superior to the secondary wives, and be able to make them "toe the mark," yet in that household is a woman to whom she must show obedience, and that is the mother of her husband. She is practically a servant to her mother-in-law; and fondly does she look forward to the day when

she will be a mother-in-law, and make her son's wife feel her authority.

In whatever grade of society the woman is found she is held in subjection to the will of her husband. In the homes of the well-to-do and rich she is completely secluded from male society, and among the lower classes this is true to a limited extent. The rules of seclusion are more strictly enforced in some localities than in others. Dr. Nevius gives an instance, in the province of Shantung, of a stranger being driven out of a village by a mob on account of taking the liberty of asking a woman in the street the road to an adjoining town. "In many places the women are found thronging the streets, bearing heavy burdens, performing the most menial services, competing with rough and half-naked men in feats of strength and labor, herself as boisterous and masculine as they." Strangers might say that no women are seen in the streets of China, when perhaps one-third of the burden-bearers they pass are women dressed so much like their brothers that it is difficult to distinguish them.

The woman of the upper class passes a life of seclusion and comparative idleness. She may be called wife, but to her it is a hollow title; for she is more the plaything of her husband. She can

spend her time making embroidery, fashioning her clothes, ornamenting her tiny shoes, cultivating her musical talent, entertaining her lady callers, or amusing and gratifying the whims of her masterful husband and mother-in-law, without expecting any return for her kindness and love. On high occasions, such as birthdays, weddings, and some festivals, it is customary for the tinseled lady of the inner apartments to invite her female friends to spend a day or two with her, and, while her lord is entertaining his male guests in the gaudy open reception-rooms, she and her lady guests while away their time playing cards, gossiping, eating and drinking, and enjoying themselves after a Chinese fashion. The sexes never mingle in their social feasts. When the female guests return to their homes, the hostess gives a present to each, consisting of a sponge-cake and other sweetmeats. If she fails to do this, she is pronounced by her guests as deficient in breeding and very inhospitable. "It is easy to determine who is the first and principal wife in the establishment. She is more dignified in her appearance, and more easy and free in her manners, taking the lead in everything, doing the honors of the house and table, issuing orders to the servants, evidently not considering the smaller wives, as they

are sometimes called, on an equality with her. She claims to be the mother of the household, and looks upon all the children born in the house as her own." When she becomes the mother of a son, she rises in the estimation of her husband, and inside that household, henceforth, is treated almost as his equal.

The woman of the middle class has more freedom than her more exalted sister. She is sometimes seen in company with other ladies, enjoying an outdoor ramble, while the highest lady must go in a closed sedan-chair, seeing no one and not being seen. The tottering gait of the middle-class women, caused by their bound feet, as well as the silken garments they wear, causes them to be distinguished from the female laborer and domestic. "These waving willows," as the Oriental poet loves to call them, steady themselves with walking-sticks or by resting on the shoulder of a bondmaid or small boy or girl. These women, in spite of their crippled appendages, have been known to walk ten and fifteen miles a day. Although they are allowed to hobble about more or less at their pleasure, yet they must abide in the female apartments when their husbands receive guests. It is a bad breach of etiquette for a guest to inquire concerning the health

of the lady of the house. The host may condescend to answer such an impolite question by saying that "the occupant of the inner apartment is well."

The wives and daughters of small farmers and laborers spend their time much as their husbands and brothers do. Their feet, if bound at all, are much larger than those of the higher classes. They work in the fields, carry burdens, and do all kinds of physical labor, except carrying sedan-chairs. While engaged in menial labor, they are usually accompanied by husband, brother, or son, and thus are protected from the rude and vulgar rabble.

The females of the boat-people—a class of people who are compelled to live in boats—are as much at home in managing the boat as the males. Many boats are manned by women, while the men are on a fishing expedition. I once saw a wife at one oar and three children less than twelve years of age at the other, pulling against the tide, while the father of the household (or boathold) sat leisurely smoking his pipe. If one of the children should fall overboard, the mother would plunge in after it, and bring it back in safety to its floating home. The land-women call these boat-women "water-fowls."

The secondary wives of the higher classes are scarcely more than servants in the household until they become mothers. A filial son is expected to marry as his first wife the girl that his parents may secure for him; but he is at liberty to choose his own secondary wives. Thus it sometimes occurs that the first wife is uncongenial, and a second or third wife becomes the favorite, and even fares better than the legal head of the harem.

So evil are the effects of polygamy that many girls commit suicide rather than marry. Dr. Gray gives the following account: "In one street alone—in the Honam suburb of Canton—I knew four families in which there were ladies who positively refused to marry, on the grounds that, should their husbands become polygamists, there would remain for them a life of unhappiness. To avoid marriage, some become Buddhist or Tauist nuns; others prefer death to marriage. During the reign of Tau-Kwang, fifteen virgins, whom their parents had affianced, met together, upon learning of the fact, and resolved to commit suicide. They flung themselves into a tributary stream of the Canton River, in the vicinity of the village where they lived. The tomb in which the corpses were interred is called the 'Tomb of the Virgins.'"

Polygamy is not the only cause of trouble in the family. The husband is master, and he not infrequently shows his authority by beating his wives. Sometimes these poor creatures are injured so badly that they die. The mother-in-law usually sides with her son in domestic trouble, and thus adds fuel to the already kindled fire. Arthur H. Smith gives an account of a mother-in-law whose family consisted only of herself, her son, and her son's wife, who exercised such a tyranny over the two latter that they were never allowed to sleep together. If the son wished to please his mother, he did so by beating his wife. The latter, being accused of having appropriated to her own use a skein of thread which did not belong to her, was so abused in consequence that she threw herself into a well, whence she was rescued by her husband. Her mother brought her to the foreign home in which the mother was employed as a nurse, and the daughter, having passed a few days in this seclusion, remarked, with a bitter reference to her previous abode, that "it was so peaceful that it seemed like heaven."

An instance came under my own observation that shows how the gospel will cause the mother-in-law to be a protector. We (the missionaries and

native pastor) had been holding street services in a large village, and on our way back to our homes we called on some native Christian families. As we approached the home of one of these families, we heard some loud weeping, and saw two women in great distress, and soon found out that the younger of the two women had just received a severe whipping by her husband, and his mother, instead of siding with him, reproved him for his unkindness, and was trying to console her daughter-in-law. The husband said his wife had overcharged in selling some goods, and he thought it his duty to punish her for so doing. His mother had told him she believed it was wrong for a Christian to beat his wife. He said he had never supposed it was wrong. We told him his mother was right. He went to his wife and asked her to forgive him, which she did, and she also said she would hunt up the person whom she had overcharged and make it right. This shows the mellowing influence of the gospel on a Chinese mother-in-law, husband, and wife. It might not be a bad idea for some so-called Christian people in America to try the same antidote.

Husbands sometimes sell their wives to become the wives of other men. When this is done, the

wife must give her consent. A document is drawn up and signed with the names of the husband and wife, stating the object of the sale, and, after it has been stamped by a hand or foot of both these parties, smeared over with black ink, it is turned over to the purchaser.

A husband can divorce his wife for any of seven reasons, to wit: unfilial conduct toward his parents, adultery, jealousy, loquacity, theft, virulent disease, or barrenness. "There does not seem to be any lawful reason to justify a wife in leaving her husband. The idea of divorcing her husband for adultery, or for any reason whatever, is one which excites a smile, as absurd and preposterous, whenever mentioned to the Chinese. Duty with her is simply and solely to follow her husband, submit to his caprices and the domination of his parents, until death releases her, or she is sold by him or divorced." (Doolittle.) There are three reasons which should prevent a wife from being divorced. If she has been faithful to his parents while they lived; if he, being poor and unknown when married, comes to honor and riches while she is his wife; if her parents are dead and she has no other home to which she can go—these reasons, unless the case

be a very exaggerated one, would prevent her from being divorced.

When the first wife dies, the second wife does not advance to her place. The secondary wives are not allowed to die in the home unless they have borne children. When it is seen that death is approaching, the poor, childless creature is carried to an outhouse, where she expires.

If the husband dies, the first wife is supposed never to marry again. She is to belong to the same husband in the future world. She may become a secondary wife or a concubine of some other man, but, in the Chinese sense, she is never married again. She rides in a red bridal-chair but once. If she is true to her husband, she will remain in his father's family in perpetual widowhood. If she remains a dutiful daughter-in-law, ever showing respect for her dead husband, and faithfully caring for and looking after the education of his children, some one may call the emperor's attention to her faithfulness, and he may direct that an archway be erected to commemorate her virtuous deeds.

It may not be generally known that a singular form of sutteeism prevails in some parts of China. It is not done by burning as in India. Sometimes

the widow will take poison (most frequently opium), and lie down and expire beside her husband's body. Some drown themselves, others starve themselves, and still others hang themselves. Sometimes, when the widow is loath to take her own life, her own relations and those of her husband will try to persuade her to the act, hoping to have the family honored by having a memorial portal erected, by command of the emperor, in honor of the devoted widow. When the suttee is to be performed by hanging, a scaffold is erected in or near the house of the widow. "At the appointed time she ascends the platform and sprinkles some water around on the four sides of it. She then scatters several kinds of grain around in different directions. These are done as omens of plenty and prosperity in her family. After being seated in a chair on the platform, she is generally approached by her own brothers, and her husband's brothers, who worship her. This is sometimes accompanied by the offering to her of tea or wine. When everything is ready, she steps upon a stool, and, taking hold of the rope, which is securely fastened to a high portion of the platform or the roof of the house, adjusts it about her own neck. She then kicks the stool away from under her, and thus becomes her own murderer."

(Doolittle.) The story is told of a widow who, after she had been worshiped on the scaffold, suddenly remembered that she had forgotten to slop the pigs. She excused herself, and, promising to return, hastened away to feed the swine, and never returned. A mandarin who had come to honor the occasion with his presence, and do obedience to the widow, was so chagrined that no mandarin has ever graced a suttee with his presence since that day.

As singular as it may seem, some Chinese women have arisen in the face of obstacles until they occupy the foremost positions in the empire. During the Tang Dynasty a woman occupied the throne and ruled China with an iron hand. Although she was cruel, yet Empress Wu's reign of forty years was one of prosperity. The present empress dowager exercises more influence in the empire than the young emperor. Another anomaly is, that the most popular idols in China are goddesses. The goddess of mercy is worshiped far more than Buddha.

As sad and lonely as the secluded life of the Chinese woman is, it has doubtless been more or less of a protection to her. The Chinese women are, as a rule, virtuous. Vile women can be found in every neighborhood; but they were kidnaped

when they were children, or parents on the verge of starvation have sold their daughters to a life of shame, or widows have been sold by heartless relatives of their husbands to become the victims of vice. Missionaries are sometimes able to save helpless girls and widows from this living death. A few years ago a Christian widow was about to be sold by heathen relatives. The widow made known her trouble to a missionary lady, who bought her for $120, and thus rescued her from a life of sorrow. She was afterward married to a Christian husband. When China becomes a Christian nation, then can her afflicted daughters enjoy the freedom of the women of Christendom. Japan has undertaken to give to her daughters Western freedom without a Christian civilization to protect them, and the result is that virtuous women in Japan are relatively fewer than in China.

CHAPTER IV.

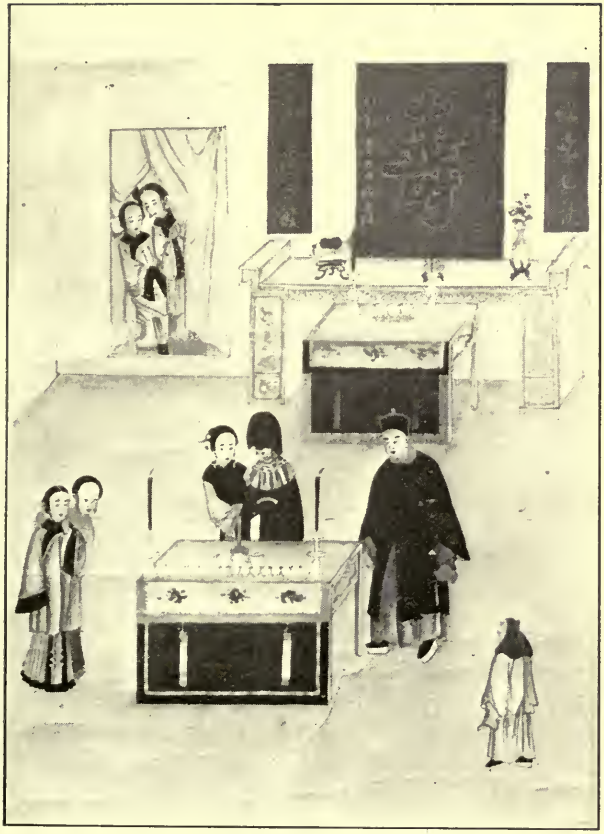
HOW THEY ARE BETROTHED AND MARRIED.

THE supreme object for which a girl is born—so teach the sages of the Middle Land—is that she may get married and become the mother of sons. The dark-eyed little creature has this so deeply impressed upon her mind by her Confucian parents that it is seldom that a girl ever enters a protest against being betrothed to whomsoever her parents or guardian may choose to affiance her. As a rule, she is not consulted on the subject, and frequently knows nothing of the matter until the betrothal is consummated. Then it is too late to object; for betrothal is as sacred as a marriage in the eyes of the Chinese. Sometimes the young miss commits suicide before the day of marriage; but this is not because she objects to the marriage relation, so much as to the polygamous features of Oriental married life. So binding is a betrothal that, when her affianced dies, the girl is expected to leave the house of her father, and spend her life in the home of the

parents of the dead. If she is a true Confucianist she will never marry, but lives in perpetual seclusion as a virgin. Sometimes her own parents and those of her dead *fiancé* will try to persuade her to remain in her fathers' house and be married to another man. They do this for fear, after going to the dead young man's parents' home to live, she may regret her decision, and conclude to marry, and thus bring disgrace on both families. In case of a betrothal, red threads are interchanged between the contracting parties. The Chinese figuratively say the feet of the affianced are bound together with the threads.

When a betrothed person dies, the expression "broken thread" is used in speaking of the sad event. The custom of using red threads is explained by the Chinese as follows:

"In the time of the Tang dynasty, Ui-Ko was once a guest in the city of Sung. He observed an old man by the light of the moon reading a book, who addressed him thus: 'This is the register of the engagements in marriage for all places under the heavens. In my pocket I have red cords, with which I tie the feet of those who are to become husband and wife. When this cord has been tied, though the parties are of unfriendly families or of different nations, it is impossible to change their destiny.



CHINESE MARRIAGE SCENE.
(From a Chinese water-color painting.)

Your future wife,' said the old man, 'is the child of the old woman who sells vegetables in yonder shop at the north.' In a few days Ui-Ko went to see her, and found the old woman had in her arms a girl about a year old and exceedingly ugly. He hired a man, who went and, as he supposed, killed the girl. Fourteen years afterward, in the country of Siong-Chiu, was a prefect whose family name was Mo, who gave Ui-Ko in marriage a girl who, he affirmed, was his own daughter. She was very beautiful. On her eyebrow she always wore an artificial flower. Ui-Ko constantly asking her why she wore the flower, she at length said: 'I am the daughter of the prefect's brother. My father died in the city of Sung when I was an infant. My nurse was an old woman who sold vegetables. One day she took me with her out into the streets, when a robber struck me. The scar of the wound is still left on my eyebrow.' "

The red threads indicate that heaven has decided who are to be husband and wife in this as well as the next life. Ui-Ko had finally to marry the girl that the fates had fixed upon as his bride. Thus since the betrothal as well as the marriage is fixed by Heaven, and is for the future world as well as this, many persons would refuse to rebetroth their

sons to girls who had been affianced. Other persons are not so scrupulous and would be willing to betroth their sons to girls who had lost their affianced, providing they could secure them on more favorable terms than girls who had never been so engaged.

Sometimes parents will agree to betroth their unborn children, providing they prove to be of opposite sex. Thus many a little girl, when she comes to know anything at all about life's relations, finds she is bound for life to a child-husband; the marriage proper may not be consummated until the children are grown. Poor people sometimes buy a girl baby or rescue a female waif, and raise her in their family to become the future wife of their son. Their poverty would not allow them to pay the price of a grown girl, and then they have her services in their family while she is growing up. Missionaries and native Christians are taking radical measures against "child-betrothals," because the girl is practically a slave, and involuntary marriage is considered wholly anti-Christian. The masters of bondmaids are obliged to allow them to marry, but stipulated prices are paid for them. Such marriages do not end the slave life; for the families into which they marry are usually poor, or they become sec-

ondary wives in wealthy families and servants to a brutal husband, domineering mother-in-law, and irritated first wife.

If the girl happens to be an only child, and the father does not desire to become a polygamist that he may be the father of a son, her parents may seek out for her a husband who is willing to live in their family and be to them a son, as well as a husband to the daughter. The young man not only agrees to marry the girl, but he must also assume the surname of his father-in-law, and thus becomes heir of the family estate.

If the girl's father is rich, he may seek out some well-educated but poor young man who may aspire to be a mandarin, and bestow upon him a valuable dowry providing he will marry the daughter, and thus enable him to become the father-in-law of a literary son-in-law, who may some day be a civil officer.

It is considered a great disgrace for a widow to marry again as a primary wife. She is to belong to the same husband in the future existence; hence to marry as principal wife results in confusion of relations in the next world. She may become a secondary wife to some man—which is simply a form of concubinage—but to become a legal wife after

her husband's decease is considered scandalous. No son of a rich and fashionable family ever marries a widow for his primary wife. Poor families frequently marry a son to a widow, because widows are cheaper in price than virgins. Riding in the gorgeous red bridal-chair is a privilege only allotted to first wives. These chairs can be hired at any well-kept "chair stand." They are arranged so that the bride is completely shut in from public gaze during the journey to the home of the bridegroom. She rides in the wedding-chair but once. Widows and other women that become secondary wives are quietly taken to their so-called husband's home in a common black sedan-chair.

Although many Chinese deny that girls are sold to become wives, yet it is undoubtedly true that a stipulated amount is paid the father of the girl before the betrothal is consummated. The Chinese explain this by saying that all this amount, and more too, comes back to the bridegroom's family in the form of dowry from the bride's family. This is probably true in many instances, but not in the large majority of cases. In the case of secondary wives the purchaser examines the female offered for sale, as a stock-man would examine an animal, at the same time making remarks about her in a depreciating

way, thus trying to make her father believe she is not worth so much money, and endeavoring to buy her at a lower figure. A secondary wife is much cheaper in price than one that is to occupy the position of first lady of the harem under the husband's mother. When an inferior wife enters the home for the first time, she must kneel down and do obeisance to, and worship, the primary wife.

Persons of the same family name are not allowed to marry; but in some provinces relatives of a different clan name may intermarry. The Chinese seem to think that sameness of name and not sameness of blood is a cause of incest or "confounds the marriage relation." In some parts of the empire a man is not allowed to marry his cousin, nor his stepdaughter, nor his aunt, nor the sister of his mother. If he does so, he is put to death by strangulation.

The betrothal and marriage customs differ in many important features in different parts of the empire. In all sections a go-between is employed, through whom all important transactions are conducted. These match-makers may be of either sex. They are paid for their services, and depend on such work for a livelihood. The go-between is first employed by the family of the young man, and after

the introductory steps in the betrothal are taken and responded to favorably, the girl's family employ him also.

Marriage is more the business of the family than of the contracting parties; hence the young people must get married, whether they wish to or not. The girl is seldom consulted on the subject. Frequently the betrothal is consummated without the girl knowing of the transaction. She is then notified, and told to prepare for the wedding, that may take place at no very distant day. The father of the young man calls a go-between and makes inquiry concerning a young lady that would be a suitable companion for his son. The middle-man is ever ready to make a suggestion. He is supposed to be acquainted with all the families in the region round about that may contain marriageable girls.

Affiances are usually made between young people of families of about the same standing in society. The go-between receives from the young man's father two large red cards, united together much like the back of a book are fastened together. On the outside of one of these cards is a figure of the golden dragon, and on the inside is written the family name, the name of the young man, his age and year, day and hour of his birth. On the outside of the other

card is a gilt figure of the sacred phœnix. These are the contracting cards. The middle-man takes the cards, and goes to a certain family, and inquires upon what conditions the parents would affiance one of their daughters. If the money consideration is satisfactory, he then inquires the exact hour of the girl's birth, and immediately repairs to an astrologer and has the horoscope of both young people cast to see if they were born upon lucky hours, and if their marriage will be fortunate. He then makes his report to the father of the young man, and if everything is satisfactory, the betrothal money is paid, and after threading four needles with red threads, two of them are fastened in each of the red contracting cards, and the go-between is dispatched with them to the parents of the girl. The money having been paid over, the two cards are torn apart. The one with the dragon on it is kept by the girl's family, and the one with the phœnix, after the girl's family name, age and year, month, day, and hour of birth is written on it, is returned to the young man's family. These cards are kept in the respective families as evidence of the betrothal contract. Presents are interchanged between the families in honor of the event. The marriage may take place in a few weeks, and it may be delayed,

as in the case of child betrothals, for years. If the affianced are grown, the marriage is likely to take place as soon as the various arrangements for the wedding can be perfected. A fortune-teller selects a lucky time for the event. In some places the marriage is always at night-time.

A few days before the wedding the bridegroom's father sends presents of various eatables to the bride's family. He also sends a wild-goose and a gander. The gander is retained, and the goose is returned to the young man's family. The Chinese say that a wild-goose and a gander mate but once, and hence are emblems of a happy marriage. Each family feasts upon its respective fowl in honor of the approaching wedding. Various other preliminary ceremonies, too numerous to describe—such as sifting out the "four eyes" from the bride's clothes, "expelling the filth" from the bridegroom's clothes, the taking the bridal furniture to the bridegroom's home, etc.—are gone through with before the wedding-day.

When the fortunate day arrives, the bridegroom sends a bridal chair for the bride, accompanied by a band of music, banner-bearers, and men laden with presents for the bride's family. When the procession reaches the home of the girl, certain formalities

are gone through with; then the bride enters the chair, wailing as if her heart would break; for she then ceases to be numbered in her father's family. The sedan is closed, and the wedding pageant winds its way toward the bridegroom's home. Flaming torches, discordant music, and bursting firecrackers proclaim the approach of the marriage train. The great doors of the house are thrown open, and the bridal chair is carried in and placed in the inner court. The bridegroom, arrayed in gorgeous robes and fan in hand, approaches the chair, and knocks at its door. The bride steps out, but her head and face are completely covered with a red veil. She seems to be perfectly helpless. Her lady attendants take her in charge, and she is carried on the back of one of these attendants over a pan of redhot charcoal. The bridegroom takes his position on a stool, and the bride kneels down and knocks her head against the ground before her lord. An attendant mingles wine in two wine-cups that are tied together with red strings. The bride and groom sip together the mingled wine, as an emblem that their lives are to become one. The parents of the bride and groom are worshiped, incense is burned before the ancestral tablets, and prayers are offered to the family ancestors and gods. The newly-married

couple sit down on the side of the bridal bed, and the young husband lifts the veil from the bride's face, and probably looks upon her countenance for the first time. The marriage company now enter the banqueting hall, where a feast has been prepared for the bridegroom's parents. The bride assumes the position of waiter, and serves wine to her father-in-law and mother-in-law, and then kneels at their feet, and twice knocks her head on the ground before each of them. After this a repast is prepared for the bride. She takes her position on the east side of the table. Her mother-in-law then presents to her a cup of wine. Before she is allowed to drink it, she must kneel at the feet of her mother-in-law and do obeisance by knocking her head against the ground before her ladyship.

In some parts of China the bride is treated to a fusillade of foolish questions and rude remarks by the guests, who thus seemingly try to test her patience. The bridegroom's relatives and friends may keep her up the greater part of the night plying her with riddles, and if she fails to solve them she must pay a forfeit of cakes to each of the parties presenting the riddles. This singular custom is accompained with much drinking, and sometimes drunken brawls ensue, resulting in murder.

CHINESE MARRIAGE SCENE.
Just before the unveiling of the bride.

The wedding proper is followed by feasts and other festive gatherings in the homes of the friends of the bride and groom. Weddings among the rich are attended with great display and much expense. The common people and poor follow suit as far as they can. I knew of a boatman whose yearly salary amounted to $50 to spend $300 in betrothal money, presents, and wedding feasts. It would take six years' salary to pay his wedding expenses. One redeeming feature in all this display and expense is that it occurs but once. It makes no difference how many secondary wives a man may take, there is no display, and the only expense is what the concubines actually cost. How sad is domestic life in the land of Confucius!

CHAPTER V.

THE HOUSES IN WHICH THEY LIVE, AND THE CUSTOMS AND RITES ATTENDING THEIR BURIAL.

The family tie is strong among the Chinese. Although the men and women have but little to do in the matter of choosing their life companions, yet they frequently manifest much affection for each other in their domestic relations. The people are clannish, and migrate but little. Most of them live where their ancestors settled thousands of years ago. Frequently a large village is found whose inhabitants bear the same family name. Probably they are descendants of one ancient family, and the town has grown up on the original country-seat. The Chinese live in cities or villages. Now and then a lone house will be found on some mountain or hill side, or in some cozy dale; but this is quite exceptional. The streets, as a rule, are crowded, narrow, and filthy, and are thronged with hucksters, urchins, dogs, cats, and pigs. The business-houses and dwellings are, scarcely without an exception, one story. The fam-

ilies of most of the shopkeepers live in dirty, cramped-up quarters at the rear of their places of business. In these dismal places the females are housed, seldom getting a fresh breath of air or ray of sunlight to invigorate their sluggish existence. An elderly woman may assist in the shop, or a bright-faced girl less than seven years of age may play among the customers; but the other females of the storekeeper's family are supposed to be invisible.

The houses of the poor in South China are mud huts, with tile or thatch roofs; the floors are mother earth pounded flat and hard; very infrequently tile floors are seen. The windows are holes in the walls about fourteen inches square, across which wooden bars are placed.

Rude, unpainted square tables, backless wooden stools, and beds consisting of two wooden benches about four feet long, upon which are laid some boards covered with rush matting, make up the necessary household furniture. In winter, straw matting is used on the beds instead of the rush matting. In North China the bed (kang) is made of brick, and is arranged so it can be heated. "To Occidentals who wish to feel positive heat from some source diffusing itself in grateful currents all over the body

a Chinese kang on a cold night is a very inadequate substitute for the chimney-corner or the stove. . . . The whole family is huddled together on this terrace (kang). The material of which it is composed becomes infested with insects, and, even if the adobe bricks are annually removed, there is no way to secure immunity from these unwelcome guests, which are fixed occupants of the walls of all classes of dwellings." (Arthur Smith.) The winter bed-covering is simply a thick cotton comfortable; in summer, only a cotton coverlet is used. Feather-beds and spring mattresses are never used. A lady doctor fresh from America was greatly touched when she first saw the sick in the hospitals lying on hard board beds. She went to work among the foreign community people, and soon raised $500, with which she purchased spring cots to place in the hospital. The sick were cozily put to rest on the cots the first evening; but what was the doctor's chagrin next morning to find all her patients lying on the floor. She never afterwards could get one of them to lie on a spring cot. They said they felt as though they were falling all the time.

The framework of some of the huts of the poor is wood, while the parts of the walls between the frames consist of bamboo lath covered with mud

plaster. The houses of the middle class are built of the same material as the huts of the poor, although some of them are extravagant enough to use brick. The mud houses are durable, and sometimes quite comfortable. The foundations are made of stone or brick. Then a bottomless and topless box, about five feet long, eighteen inches wide, and eighteen inches deep, is placed on the foundation at one corner, and the box is pounded full of damp earth. Then the box is loosened and lifted off, leaving a mud brick of the dimensions of the box. The box is then placed on the wall at the end of the newly-made brick, and again pounded full of mud, thus making another brick. This process is kept up until a layer of mud bricks covers the foundation. Then another course of bricks is made, and another, and another, and so on, until the required height is reached. A roof is then put on, and the walls are left to dry. The walls are usually built after the rainy season is over, and become quite dry before the wet weather begins again. They get exceedingly hard, and often stand for centuries. Our house in China was a Chinese mud house foreignized; we found it very comfortable.

The swayback roof, with eaves turning up at the corners, is the universal style. All the houses of the

well-to-do and rich are built around open inclosures or courts. The American house is usually surrounded by a yard; the Chinese yard is surrounded by a house. Some Chinese houses have several open courts, varying in size from fifteen feet square to fifty by a hundred feet. The smaller ones are called heaven's wells. They are usually paved with tile. Sometimes they are decorated with trees and flowering plants, and form convenient breathing places for the caged inmates of the inner apartments. No heating stoves are found in Chinese houses. Little hand-braziers or earthenware hand-stoves are carried by all classes, and are commonly fastened by a belt to the front of the body underneath the clothes. If these little stoves do not furnish sufficient heat, the deficiency is made up by additional clothing. The cook-stoves are mud ranges about three feet high, three feet wide, and as long as need be, according to the number of the members of the family. The kitchens are generally in front of the houses.

The outside of a large Chinese house presents a blank appearance. The windows and nearly all the doors open into the court, leaving the outer walls devoid of openings, except the large double doors in the front of the building. The dwellings of the

KUSHAN MONASTERY AND MOUNTAIN NEAR FOOCHOW.

wealthy are not only supplied with the best of Chinese furniture, porcelain and lacquer, but elegant foreign pictures, sofas and bric-a-brac are frequently seen in them also.

The houses of the officials are built according to certain prescribed laws. The following description of the house of an officer of the first class can be taken as a sample of the best houses in China: The foundation must be twenty inches deep. The house must have nine open courts, each surrounded with private apartments. The pillars that support the vaulted roofs must be of wood painted black. The ridge-beams of the vaulted roofs are gilded, and figures of flying dragons decorate the roofs. In the private apartments the roofs are painted with images of dragons, phœnixes, and cheluns. Porcelain figures of dragons, dolphins, and cheluns adorn the outside of the roofs. In the front of the house is a large gate with a vaulted roof; the gate has three doorways. The doors are painted green or black, and have two large copper rings supported by lion's heads made of the same material. In front of the door is a high wall built to keep out spirits, which are supposed always to go in a straight line, and hence are not able to find their way around the wall.

The windows are ornamented with lattice-work and (glass being never used) wooden blinds, which are shut at night-time to keep out the cold.

The houses are seldom swept. Among the middle and lower classes, dogs, cats, chickens, pigs, and even cattle, may be found in the house courts. The cats, dogs, chickens, and hogs find their way into the central reception-room. Ancestral tablets and the family gods have niches and shrines set apart for them in all the houses. There is a neglected, dreary, tumble-down appearance to nearly all the Chinese dwellings. Everything seems to be in a state of decay.

The Chinese woman, whether her home be a thatch-roofed mud hut or gilded palace, knows nothing of the freedom and little of the comfort that her Western sisters enjoy; for she is a slave girl, a plodding laborer, or a tinseled plaything in the house of her lord. Her home is her prison, and her husband is the prison master.

The burial customs of the Chinese are exceedingly sad, although in a sense interesting. It is a very common thing to find bodies of dead infants wrapped up in matting, lying beside the city walls, floating in the streams, or suspended from the branches of trees, to keep them from being devoured

by dogs; or hid away in baby houses—small structures with a small hole in the side, that have been erected for that purpose. These bodies being most frequently female, have led many persons to think that infanticide is still more common that it really is.

Superstition more frequently than poverty is the cause of this denial of burial to infants. The parents, as a rule, take the utmost care of the sick baby, and seemingly do all in their power to restore it to health; but as soon as the little one dies, the parental affection is turned to hate, and it is called a "Twan-ming kwei"—short-lived devil. Its body is supposed to have been possessed with the spirit of a deceased creditor of a former state of existence. The child is regarded as an intruding enemy, which has been living off of the family and trying to exact satisfaction for the old debt; it has occasioned a great amount of trouble, expense, and sorrow, and has left nothing but utter disappointment to the care-worn parents. In their indignation, the father and mother cast out the uncoffined body, sweep the house, light firecrackers, and beat gongs to drive away the intruding spirit, that it may never enter the house again. Heathenism and superstition change loving parents into hateful rejecters of their own offspring. The corpses of all children are not

so treated; but many are, and especially those of girl babies.

When an adult is about to die, the burial clothes are brought and placed beside the dying person. The family all surround the bed, and as soon as the breath is out of the body, they all break out simultaneously into loud weeping and wailing. They say they do this as a formal adieu to the departed. All beyond death is enshrouded in darkness; hence they light candles and burn incense in order to light the spirit on its way. The body is dressed, and the oldest son approaches and kneels down before the dead, and places wine, vermicelli, and rice to the lips of the corpse three times, while the other members of the family kneel around, and pour out their lamentations. Immediately after the offering of rice, vermicelli, and wine, a miniature sedan-chair and diminutive chair-bearers made of bamboo paper, together with four cups of wine and eight cakes, are burned. The chair and the chair-coolies are intended for the use of the dead in the unseen world, and are spiritualized by fire; for it is supposed that the spirit would prefer to ride than to go afoot in the infernal regions; the cakes are to feed the coolies.

When the body is placed in the coffin, all the relatives again break forth with loud cries and lam-

entations. Ashes, lime, and bundles of pith are placed in the coffin with the corpse. The coffin, which is made of heavy thick plank, is then closed and hermetically sealed. In the case of the rich, it is painted; every seventh day it is painted again until the forty-ninth day, when the seventh coat of paint or lacquer is put on. Then it is ready for burial, providing a lucky place has been found in which to bury the dead. One spirit of a Chinese that is supposed to sleep with the body—for every Celestial is supposed to have three spirits, one of which sleeps in the coffin—remains in the room with the unburied body until the interment takes place; and if the body is buried in an unlucky place, this spirit can not rest, but comes back and haunts the relatives until the body is buried in a lucky place. While the coffined body is kept in the house, incense is continually burned before the dead. A table, chair, and a wooden framework made of bamboo are placed in the presence of the spirit. An incense-bowl, chopsticks, rice-bowl, and wine-cup are placed on the table for the accommodation of the spirit. A longevity picture—a likeness of the departed—is hung upon the wall. All this is done for the comfort and convenience of the spirit. The spirit not being able to talk, its wants are discovered by the

flipping of two copper cash that have been tied together. "When the family wish to ask anything of the dead, these cash are taken by some one and held in the smoke of the incense kept burning on the table, the person at the same time making the inquiry or stating the circumstances in such a way that an affirmative or negative reply, 'yes' or 'no,' can be given. When he has done speaking, the cash are dropped on the table. If their relative positions on the table are the same as when dropped, the reply given by the deceased to the question asked is regarded as affirmative. If different, the reply is regarded as negative."

Relatives sleep beside the coffin. They bring hot water in a basin every morning to the side of the coffin, that the dead may wash; food is brought at meal-time and placed beside the coffin, and when bedtime comes the members of the family bid the dead good-night.

These peculiar customs are kept up until the forty-ninth day, when the family, if rich, place a large supply of uncooked food, wood, wine, and water on the table. An abundance of mock money is also provided and burned; it is supposed this becomes real money in the other world. This is all done to give the dead a gentle hint that she must

henceforth cook her own food, and must also purchase more when this supply is gone, because the relatives do not intend to cook the food or make purchases for her any longer. Sometimes clothes, servants, homes, and furniture made of paper, are burned, and thus sent on to the spirit-world; for it is thought that the spirit will have need of all these. When the family can afford it, priests are hired to take general charge of most, if not all, of these ceremonies. These priests also, at stated times, beat gongs, ring cymbals, and chant weird liturgies in order to pacify and bring repose to the disembodied soul.

Mourning for a mother continues for twenty-seven months. During all this time no silk is worn; officials resign their offices and retire from public life. Confucius was in retirement three years after the death of his mother.

In 1882, Li Hung Chang resigned his official position and retired to mourn the death of his mother. The government was passing through trying circumstances, and could not do without his wise counsel for twenty-seven months; hence the emperor and the queen regent requested him, after one hundred days of mourning, to return to his official duties. They said: "The ques-

tions of the hour are attended with much difficulty, and the viceroy should struggle to repress his private sorrow, looking upon the affairs of State as of the first importance, and striving to make some return to us for our kindness to him. This will be the conduct that will inspire his mother's mind with the comforting conviction that her son, following the precepts early instilled into him, is devoting himself to the service of his country, and fervent is our hope that this view of the matter will commend itself to the viceroy."

The great viceroy protested earnestly against returning to duty before the appointed days of mourning were over. He said: "A sense of shame would continue to harrass him. He therefore prays their Majesties, in pitying recognition of the reality of their foolish servant's grief, to recall their commands and graciously permit him to vacate his post and observe the full term of mourning; that the autumn frosts and spring dews may in the course of time witness some alleviation of his bitter regrets. . . . Thus, little by little, now with loud weeping and now with silent sobs, has their Majesties' servant told them his piteous tale; and the anxiety with which he awaits their commands is beyond his

power to express." His wishes were not granted, and he was obliged to return to the duties of State at the end of one hundred days of mourning.

The soul of the deceased that is to be born again must linger in the infernal regions until the time of rebirth comes. A sort of a servant imp or devil is furnished by the kings of Hades to pilot this soul, so it will not lose the way to the land of shades. The relatives are anxious that the little imp shall do his work faithfully; hence a goodly supply of rice, a rice-bowl, and chopsticks are placed for his use on the table in front of the dead. Mock-money is also burned, to furnish the imp with some ready cash to meet the expenses of the journey.

The third soul goes into the ancestral tablet, and its spiritual desires are satisfied by the frequent burning of incense, offerings of food and wine, as well as almost daily worship by the relatives that linger on the shores of time. The poor bury their dead almost immediately after death—if they bury the body at all. They can not afford the great expense attending the regular and continuous ceremonies for the dead. These sudden burials are termed "blood burials," and are considered disgraceful. Frequently the corpses of the poor are put in

rude unpainted coffins, and left for years unburied, until some charitable persons inter the neglected bodies.

The well-to-do and rich should be buried at the end of forty-nine days. Frequently the priests who have been hired to find a lucky burial-place have been unable to find a suitable spot. (The longer the priests can put off the funeral the more money they are likely to get for their services.) Frequently the last rites are delayed for years. The coffined bodies are kept in the houses of the relatives, or stored away in little rest-houses, or covered with waterproof matting and placed in the dense shade of some sacred banyan-tree. There are multiplied thousands of unburied coffins, with bodies in them, of rich and poor, in the Fuh-Kien province, and possibly in all the provinces in China. Visitors are frequently put to sleep in rooms containing the coffined dead. White is the badge of mourning. The relatives of the dead wear coarse white garments. Men wear white strings braided into their queues, and white buttons on their caps. The rich are buried with much pomp and display. In Central China the dead are buried near the surface, and a conical tumulus is built over the grave. In the Fuh-Kien province the omega, or horseshoe, tomb is the style.

A Deceased Wife of the Emperor of China.

The graves of the poor are much the same as the graves in America. Sometimes these graves are plastered over with cement or artificial stone. After many years the graves of the poor are opened; the bones are taken out and sealed up in small earthen pots, and then reburied, and the old grave is used again for the body of some other poor son or daughter of Adam.

The Chinese have been burying in the same graves for three thousand years. Vast stretches of country, mostly hillsides, are literally covered with graves for miles and miles. "What a solemn thought that all these myriads have gone down to fill idolatrous graves, without any knowledge of the God that made them, and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent!" (Nevius.) If they had any knowledge of the true God, that knowledge had been bedimmed by sin and beclouded by superstition and idolatry.

CHAPTER VI.

THEIR RELIGIOUS CONDITION.

THE Chinese are decidedly religious; this is especially true of the females. Temples, wayside shrines, altars, and ancestral halls abound. I have noticed extravagant statements in the American newspapers and magazines to the effect that the temples in China were falling into disuse, and that the people were forsaking the gods of their fathers, and that if Christianity were not soon accepted by the people the Chinese erelong would be like the Hawaiians were, when the missionaries first landed at Honolulu, without a religion and without objects of worship. So far as my observation went, I found no warrant for such radical statements. The first temple I visited was being thoroughly remodeled and repaired, and so I found many temples undergoing repairs. Christianity is making rapid progress in China, but it is doing so by rooting out and displacing, not three religions that have lost their grip upon the masses, but three religions that are deeply rooted in the hearts, lives, and practices of the peo-

ple. It may be said that the temples are not kept free from dust, cobwebs, and vermin; that many of them have a torndown and neglected appearance. All this is equally true of the homes of the people that frequent them. The Chinese never repair or clean anything until circumstances compel them to do so. As a rule the temples are kept in a better state of repair than the dwellings of the masses.

Confucianism assigns women to a position of slavery, yet multiplied thousands of Chinese women are Confucianists. Since Confucius taught that the female should be subject to the three obediences—to her father, husband, and son—it seems strange that the women are such devout worshipers of the sage.

The teaching of Confucianism concerning ancestral worship may be the bond that binds the heart of womankind to a system that degrades the gentler sex. If a woman is faithful in impressing the central doctrine of the Confucian system, filial piety, upon the minds of her children, she will not only be obeyed by her offspring, but will also be worshiped by them. Her descendants will prepare an ancestral tablet in which one of her spirits will dwell (she is supposed to have three spirits, one of which, after she is dead, stays in this tablet, another abides in

the tomb with the body, while the third goes to Hades and awaits the time of rebirth), and before which her relatives will prostrate themselves; offer sacrifices of food; burn paper money, candles, and incense; cause the theatrical plays to be rendered for the benefit and entertainment of her soul that dwells therein. She is willing to be considered inferior to her father, husband, or son—yea, willing to be treated as their slave—if she can thereby merit the reverence and worship of her kindred after she has "shuffled off this mortal coil." Though she may be despised on this side of death, yet she hopes to become a worshipful object on the other side. Confucianism holds out this crumb of comfort to the downtrodden female of the "Inner Land," and she seemingly rolls it under her tongue as a sweet morsel. The home of her soul will be a wooden tablet, and her devotees will be her lineal descendants. Confucianism, on account of its doctrines of filial piety which culminated in ancestral worship, has a tremendous grip upon all classes of people in China. This filial piety is based not so much on love as fear. If a child neglects to care for a parent while living, or fails to worship before the tablet that contains the soul of his dead ancestor, the spirit of the angry parent will be sure to haunt his footsteps, and dis-

asters of every description will come upon the unfilial child. Hope of being protected by them is also an element in the acts of religious homage to ancestors. The spirit is not expected to feed upon the material elements of the food offered, but simply to appropriate the odors or exhalations or vapors arising therefrom, the grosser elements being eaten by the party making the offering; the dead and the living are thus supposed to feast together.

Tauism offers to the daughters of China fewer real attractions, and possibly more degradation, than does Confucianism, yet the women are more devoted Tauists than are the men.

The teaching of Confucius was mostly ethical and political. Beyond ancestral worship he said but little about religion. His disciples said he did not discourse on the gods. When asked about death he answered, "Imperfectly acquainted with life, how can I know of death?" The hearts of the people were not satisfied with moral and political instruction; they longed, yea, thirsted after immortality, and wished to know something about the life beyond. The immortality so dimly hinted at in ancestral worship was also recognized in Tauism, if not borrowed from it. Bishop Wiley says, "Confucius borrowed his best ideas of immortality from Lao-tsze." The

founder of Tauism also presented clearer ideas of God. He said: "Before the existence of chaos, which preceded the origin of the heavens and the earth, there existed a solitary Being, immense and silent, immutable and always acting without changing in himself. This Being we shall regard as the Parent of the universe. I am ignorant of his name, but I designate him by the word Reason." Confucianism failing to provide for the spiritual longings of man's nature was supplemented by the speculative accounts of God and the universe as found in the rationalistic writings of Lao-tsze. But alas! Tauism is not what its speculative founder intended it to be. He did not claim to be more than a man, but his followers worship him as a god. Tauism, starting with a faint idea of the true God (borrowed doubtless from the primeval religion handed down across the flood by Noah), has degenerated until the Tauistic pantheon contains images representing nearly everything "in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth." A grosser form of idolatry can scarcley be thought of.

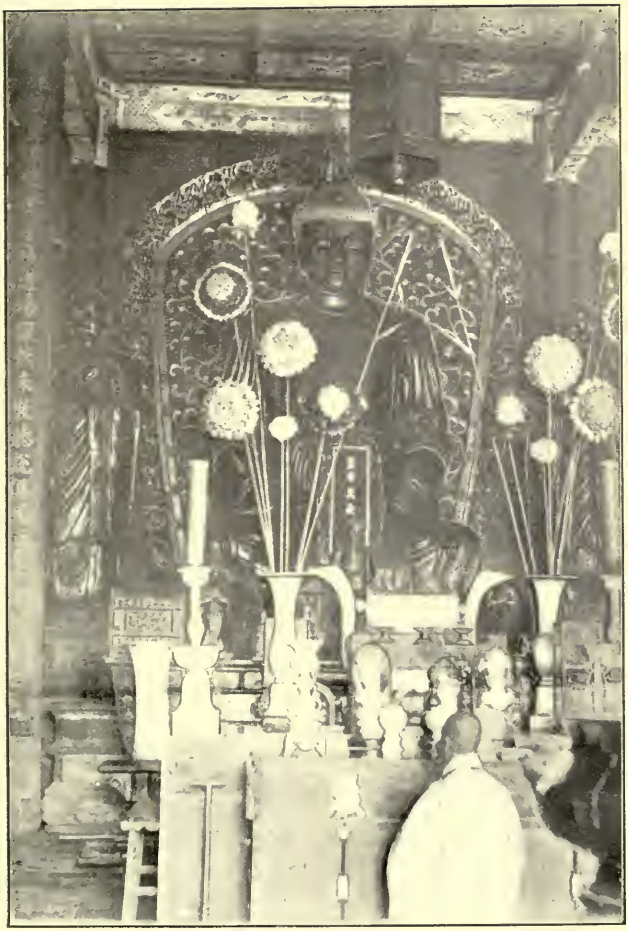
It is true that the Chinese have not gone as far as the Greeks and Romans, and deified lust, but lustful forms of worship are common. So obscene are some of the forms of worship performed by mothers,

who are anxious to have sons, that it would be improper for these rites to be described in a paper prepared for the eye of the public.

Possibly the one thing that attracts women to the Tauist shrines is a certain form of the doctrine of soul-sleeping. One of her souls is to sleep with the body in the tomb, and unless the body is buried in a spot whose fung-shui, or luck, is good, the soul can not rest in peace. It is the business of the Tauist priests to find a lucky burial-place, offer sacrifices, and chant weird ritualistic ceremonies for the rest of her soul. Buddhist priests are sometimes luck doctors; but "the rudiments of this magic art are to be found in ancient China," and hence this science of luck does not properly belong to Buddhism, which is exotic. Although the belief that the repose of their soul depends on their acceptance of Tauism, yet there are other superstitious attractions for women in this system. In domestic life the Chinese housewife wishes the special help of the kitchen god; when she desires a son, she wants the favor of the goddess that determines the sex in children; when she is about to become a mother, she courts the care of the goddess of midwifery; while she has a family growing up, she clamors for the watch-care of the goddess whose duty is to care for

children; when a child is about to be married, a Tauist priest must be employed to perform certain religious rites; and when death enters the family, the services of the priest are indispensable. Thus Tauism touches the life of the Chinese female in a thousand different ways, and, like the devil-fish, holds her in its strong embrace until her life is sapped away.

The third religion of China, Buddhism, also finds the larger numbers of its votaries among the gentler sex. This finds its explanation in the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. Woman, that has come up through successive births from a shellfish or serpent or some other lower order of existence, hopes by one more birth to become a man, and thus cease to be an inferior creature—a slave. Dr. Nevius says: "The worshipers in Buddhist temples are for the most part women, and they are advanced in age. The young women are confined to their houses by the multiplicity of their domestic duties and the customs of the country which forbid them appearing in public. The older women having comparatively little to do, and, reminded by their age of the necessity of preparing for the future state, spend much of their time in the temples. In accordance with the doctrine of the transmigration of souls so prominent



An Image of Buddha and a Priest at his Devotions.

in the Buddhist system, the great end in the worship of Buddha is to secure a more favorable position in the future state, in which it is supposed individuals will ascend and descend in the scale of existence according to the preponderance of their merits or demerits in this life. In consequence of the inferior station of women in China and their peculiar trials, being a woman is regarded as a great misfortune, and, in the bitterness incident to their present life, they console themselves with the hope that their earnest devotion at the shrine of Buddha will gain for them the position of a man in the future state. They suppose that the neglect of worship would result in being born again in one of the lower orders of animals." Thus their devotion is based upon the hope of being a man and the fear of becoming an animal in the future world.

One of the saddest sights to be seen in Buddhist countries is a sad-faced mother going about, looking into the eyes of a cat, dog, or pig, to see if she can discover the image of her dead child; for she fears it may have been reborn a beast. And yet there are some American mothers that pride themselves in being Buddhists, or Theosophists (possibly a more pleasing term). Theosophy is nothing more nor less than sugar-coated Buddhism. The Bud-

dhists of India and Japan claim that the Theosophists of America are Buddhists. Possibly the secret of the apparent devotion of Madam Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant might be found in an abnormal desire to become dashing colonels after their next birth. Possibly the Madam is to-day a precocious youth in some East India sahib's family. Even Buddhism has degenerated until it has become beastly and sensual. Beside the image of Buddha in the temples may be found a monkey idol. The monkey is worshiped in all Buddhist countries. The monkey is believed to have special charge of ghosts, witches, and elves; hence the females worship him that he may protect them from the evil influences of these dreaded beings. The tiger is worshiped because he "is supposed to have the power of absorbing or counteracting the pernicious influences which cause children to become sick."

Animal worship is not confined to Buddhism, for the Tauists have also deified beasts. So mingled are the lower forms of these two religions that it is almost impossible to distinguish between them. Some of the finest temples I have ever seen have been dedicated to animals; such as the fox, horse, dog, rabbit, lizard, or dragon. The most popular object of worship in China, not excepting Buddha,

is the Goddess of Mercy. She is a deified Buddhist nun. She is supposed to have special power in determining the sex of unborn children, hence is especially worshiped by all that desire male offspring. Since all Chinese desire male children, and do not wish to be afflicted with girls, the popularity of this goddess is easily explained. She is represented with a child in her arms. She is sometimes represented with many hands, by which she is enabled to pour blessings on many people. She is frequently called the "thousand-handed Goddess of Mercy." There is a strong resemblance between the Goddess of Mercy as worshiped by Buddhists and the Virgin Mary as worshiped by Roman Catholics. This is recognized by the Chinese. Once, when visiting a Buddhist temple with other missionaries, the head priest came out to greet us. He supposed that we were Roman Catholics; hence when we entered the temple he took us to the idol of the Goddess of Mercy, and said she was "All the same as the Virgin Mary." There is a strong resemblance between Buddhism and Romanism in many of their outer manifestations. This is admitted by Romanists themselves. They try to explain these similarities by saying the devil counterfeited the true religion when he manufactured Buddhism. But the weak-

ness in this explanation is that all these features were in Buddhism many years before there was a pope at Rome.

Doctor Nevius says, in pointing out these similarities, that they "both have a supreme and infallible head; the celibacy of the priesthood; monasteries and nunneries; prayers in an unknown tongue; prayers to saints and intercessors, and especially and principally to a Virgin with a child; also prayers for the dead; repetition of prayers, with the use of the rosary; works of merit and supererogation; self-imposed austerities and bodily inflictions; a formal daily service, consisting of chants, burning of candles, sprinkling of holy waters, bowings, prostrations, marching and countermarching. Both have also fast-days and feast-days; religious processions; images and pictures, and fabulous legends; and revere and worship relics, real and pretended."

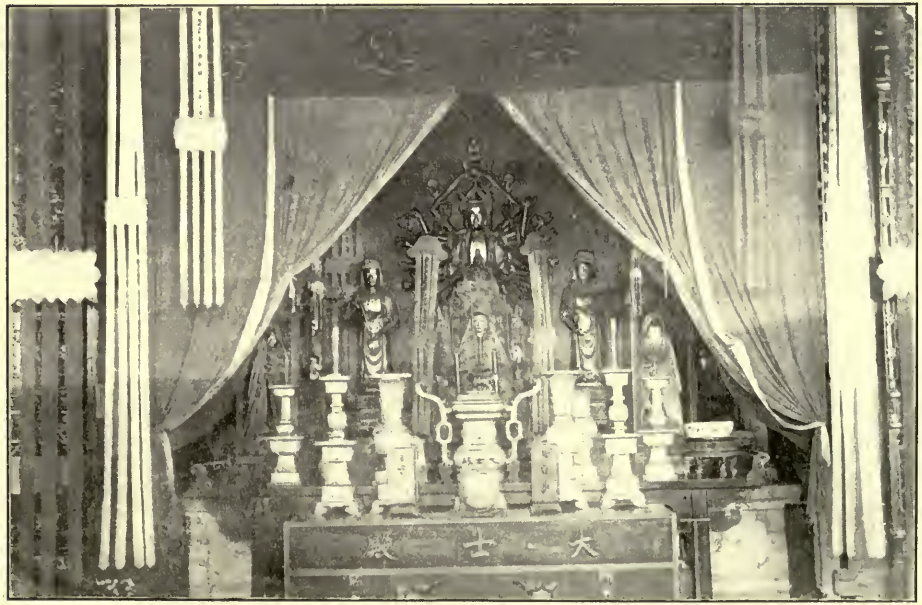
Possibly, when Romanism first came in contact with Buddhism in Western and Central Asia, Catholicism took on these popular forms of Buddhism, which finally drove out the true spirit of Christianity, and the simpler forms of primitive worship were displaced by almost endless rites and ceremonies.

Buddhist and Tauist nuns are as common in

China as Roman nuns in America, and possibly they are just as virtuous, self-sacrificing, and useful. Dr. Gray gives the following account of the self-imposed mortification of a Tauist nun: "I saw a devotee who had caused herself to be inclosed in a brick tower, having resolved to remain in this solitary confinement until she had obtained funds sufficient to enable her to rebuild the temple in the courtyard of which her temporary prison stood. The tower was provided with a small aperture, through which she received her food and could see all persons passing that way. As they approached she was able to command their attention by means of a long rope attached to the clapper of a bell which was hung in the center of the gateway." The same authority makes the following statement about Buddhist nuns: "Aspirants are received into the nunneries at the early age of ten, and their novitiate continues until they have attained their sixteenth year. At this period the female mind is considered as mature, and they are called upon to take the veil. The ceremony consists in the candidate making a declaration in the presence of the idol of Koan-Yan, the Goddess of Mercy, that she will maintain a state of perpetual virginity; that she will eat neither fish, nor flesh, nor fowl; that she will drink no wine; and that she will

endeavor to carry out in her daily life the tenets embodied in the religion of Buddha." All the Buddhist nuns do not live up to their vows, as the following from Doolittle's "Social Life of the Chinese" will indicate: "As the [provincial] treasurer was passing by a certain nunnery in the city [Foochow] during the evening, his attention was arrested by the numerous lights connected with the establishment, and the manifest proof that it was improperly visited by men. After making ample inquiries in regard to the dissolute life of the nuns, he determined to suppress the nunneries in the city, and oblige the inmates to marry or leave that section of the country. Very many gladly changed their state of single blessedness for the state of matrimony, a sufficient number of men being found to marry them." This extermination of Buddhist nunneries occurred over sixty years ago, and the city of Foochow has been compartively free from Buddhist nuns from that day to this.

Considering the corrupt forms of religion that have so long held womanhood in subjection in China, it is wonderful that the women of that trans-Pacific land are as virtuous as they are. The licentious rites of Buddhism that are practiced by wives desiring sons are fully as degrading as those of Tauism,



A Group of Chinese Goddesses, including the Goddess of Mercy and Queen of Heaven.

and this undue desire for male offspring is born of Confucianism; hence a threefold degradation is brought upon motherhood by this trinity of religions. The three religions—one ethical, another philosophical, and all in their present corrupt forms exceedingly demoralizing—are practically one in the thoughts and practices of the common people. One has compared the three religions to three serpents: "The first serpent swallowed the second serpent up to the head, beyond which it could not go. The second serpent swallowed the third to the same extent. But the third serpent, having a mouth of indefinite capacity, reached around, and, finding the tail of the first, also swallowed this serpent up to its head, leaving only three heads visible and an exceedingly intimate union between all three of the bodies. Buddhism swallowed Tauism, Tauism swallowed Confucianism, but at last the latter swallowed both Buddhism and Tauism together, and thus the three religions are one."

What is being done to rescue the womanhood of the "Flowery Land" from the embrace of the three-headed serpentine religion, and from the degrading customs of a heathen civilization that is hoary with age, will be set forth in the chapters that are to follow.

CHAPTER VII.

WHAT IS BEING DONE FOR THEIR CHRISTIANIZATION.

The first convert in Europe was a woman; the first convert in the Sandwich Islands was a woman; but the first convert in China was a man. These facts are significant. If Lydia had been a Chinese, or the "queen mother" in Hawaii had been empress dowager in the "Middle Kingdom," they possibly would have been preceded into the kingdom of grace by their more favored brothers; for the Chinese lady is secluded from male society. Under ordinary circumstances, even the logical Paul would not have been allowed to present the "unsearchable riches of Christ" to the "secluded women of Cathay." One of the serious questions that confronted the early Christian workers in the land of Confucius was how to reach the women of China. Custom forbade women to appear in a promiscuous congregation. If they gathered in congregations by themselves, no minister, foreign or native, would be allowed to address them. Sometimes a small group

of females would draw near enough to get a few crumbs of the bread of life that was being broken to their fathers and brothers, and then they would hasten away for fear some wicked person would hurl vile epithets at them. This obstacle was partly overcome by putting partitions through the middle of the churches to within a few feet of the pulpit. The sexes were thus shut off from each other's gaze, but all could hear and see the speaker. (No coquetting is allowed in a Chinese congregation.) After the churches had been arranged so that the women could sit in seclusion and listen to the message of salvation, a few of the more elderly came to the services; but the women, as a rule, did not come. The bound feet of the women made it so difficult for them to get about that, unless the church was near, they did not attend. To hire chair-bearers every time they wished to attend services was too expensive; to walk was too painful; and these being their only means of locomotion, many were kept away from the sanctuary.

The missionaries and native pastors, when visiting among the families, were not even allowed to ask after the health of the female members of the household. Pastoral work among the wives and daughters was thus wholly interrupted. Custom

shut out the missionary doctor from the gentler sex. He would not be allowed within the inner apartments except in very rare cases. Many a wife, mother, or daughter suffered and died who might have been helped by foreign skill. Not only did the seclusion and foot-binding customs shut in the woman and shut out the Christian pastor and doctor, but the females, being reared in ignorance, could not have read a Bible or tract if it had been put in their hands. Thus the doors that had been shut by custom were locked by ignorance.

The missionaries knew full well that China would never be Christianized unless the mothers and daughters could be reached, their minds and hearts enlightened by the truth of the gospel, and their feet set free to run on errands of mercy. The wives of the missionaries, it is true, could gain access to the female apartments of the Chinese homes; but they were burdened by the domestic ties and duties, and could not give the attention to the work that was necessary.

The women of the Occident grasped the magnitude of the question, and set themselves to solve it. Educated young women were sent to China to open up schools, hospitals, foundling homes, and to administer the healing art to the bodies, and "leaves

from the tree of life" to the souls of their perishing sisters of the Orient. So successful have the lady missionaries been in this noble work that many hundreds of girls and women have been educated, multitudes of the gentler sex crowd the churches, and thousands have professed to have obtained the knowledge of their sins forgiven.

How have the lady missionaries brought about these grand results? Possibly the first lady missionaries sent to China for exclusive work among the girls and women arrived in that far-away land in 1858; they were two sisters. The first year was spent in acquiring a knowledge of the language. Their active work was commenced in 1859 by opening a boarding-school for girls. The enrollment the first year amounted to one girl, who was permitted to attend by "allowing other members of her family to come and remain with her to watch over her and guard against her having her eyes gouged out, or being spirited away bodily, while she slept, by the foreign devils." The next year eight girls attended the school. Two were from heathen families. "During the year one of them was stolen by her mother, who wished to bind her feet, despite the entreaties of the young ladies, and another was taken home on pretense of making a visit. Her parents, after mak-

ing numberless excuses to lengthen her stay at home, said she could not return because she was being interested in Christianity, and they feared it would result in her refusing the one to whom they had betrothed her in her infancy." The third year found fifteen girls in the school, who were reported to have been "diligent, obedient, and truthful." Girls are admitted to these schools with the understanding that they take the six years' course of study. A grandfather objected to one of his granddaughters entering the Christian boarding-school because she ought to marry according to Chinese custom and present him with great-grandsons long before her years of schooling were over. In the face of all obstacles, the system of boarding-schools for girls has developed until hundreds of these Christian centers of life have been opened in the darkness of far Cathay.

With very few exceptions, the girls educated in these schools become Christians. When they return to their homes they become witnesses for Christ. While their mothers and sisters gather about them, they read the story of Jesus, and explain his wonderful promises. Even their fathers and brothers listen. The truth thus finds entrance to the homes, minds, and hearts that had long been closed against it. Missionaries and native pastors frequently find whole

Boarding-school Girls, Chung King.

families ready for baptism that had been led to Christ by these educated Christian girls.

Many of these young ladies, when they have finished their education, open up day-schools in their native villages, in which they teach the rudimentary principles of an education, and instruct the girls of the community in the truths of the gospel. In this way one Chinese Christian schoolteacher reaches and molds scores of her own sex for Christ and righteousness. These day-schools are being opened in thousands of centers of population. Gradually are the chains being broken that have long bound womanhood in seclusion, and the captive daughters of the "Land of Sinim" are learning to know and enjoy the freedom of God's children. The native pastors find their helpmates from among these boarding-school girls. Some of them are good public speakers, and while their husbands are busy sowing the seed in distant neighborhoods, they, like Susannah Wesley, gather the local flock together, and break unto the hungry souls the bread of life.

Another fruit of these schools is a system of schools for married women. When the wives and mothers have once tasted of the riches of God's Word they wish to learn to read the precious truth for themselves. Schools have been established in

which they are taught to read the colloquial language. Some of these women will learn to read quite readily in six or eight months. The Bible is their principal text-book. The teaching in these schools is mostly done by native women who have been educated in the girls' boarding-schools, and who have also taken a special course of instruction in Bible study. The lady missionaries not only prepare these teachers for their work, but also carefully superintend the women's schools. It is a touching sight to see these women poring over their books. Some of them have babies strapped to their backs (the customary way of carrying a small child in China) as they try to master their lessons. The language being tonal, every word has to be uttered loudly and distinctly. When twenty or thirty women are reading at the top of their voices, and half a dozen children are mingling their plaintive cries or merry laughter with the shrill notes of the mothers, it forms a musical exhibition not soon to be forgotten. From these noisy schools have come some excellent Bible students, who go forth to read the Holy Word in the homes of their less-favored sisters.

Missionaries select from among the pupils of the girls' schools and women's schools the best students, especially those that show an aptness for Scripture

teaching, and, after giving them thorough intruction, assign them to the special work of Bible-readers or deaconesses. These women are admitted to the female apartments of the Chinese homes, where no pastor, native or foreign, is allowed to enter. The Churches are reaping an abundant harvest as the fruit of the seed-sowing done by these native deaconesses.

One day one of these Bible-readers came to a missionary and told him that there were twenty-five or thirty persons in a certain village that had been converted and desired to be baptized. The missionary was surprised, and asked the deaconess who had led these people to Christ? She said she had been going there in her evangelistic work; even the men had listened as she read and explained the Word. A goodly number of both sexes had been converted, and desired baptism. The missionary went to the village, called the converts together, and questioned them carefully concerning their knowledge of the Bible, and was astonished at their fund of Scripture truth. Then he requested them all to tell their Christian experience. He said that some of the clearest statements of religious experience he had ever heard from new converts came from the lips of those men and women brought to

Christ by the native deaconess. Among them was a woman of remarkable history. She had been known from the time she was seventeen years old to the day she was converted (when she was nearly seventy years of age) as the head devil of all that region. She was a demoniac. Demoniacal possession is common in China. This is admitted by medical missionaries and European and American doctors that are practicing in China. Demoniacs have quiet moods; the Bible-reader would take advantage of these quiet spells, and read and talk to the demoniac about Jesus and how he cast out demons when he was on earth. This she continued to do from time to time until enough truth was stored in the poor woman's mind to form a basis for saving faith, and she was gloriously saved, and the devil cast out. This liberated daughter of Eve became an efficient worker for Christ. The foregoing shows how a strong Christian society sprang up as the fruit of the seed sowed by a native Bible-reader who was educated in a woman's mission school.

These schools are stirring up the heathen people, who refuse to send their daughters to Christian schools, to do something for the education of their girls. They say that if the Christian Chinese ed-

THE ANGEL MONUMENT SENT OUT FROM ENGLAND TO MARK THE RESTING-PLACE OF THE ENGLISH MARTYRS WHO WERE KILLED AT HUA SANG, NEAR FOOCHOW, BY THE VEGETARIAN REBELS, AUGUST 1, 1895.

ucate both their boys and girls, then the on-coming generations of Christian people will be smarter than the heathens, and will dominate things; hence many of the higher classes of heathen people are commencing to educate their daughters.

Others are beginning to see the benefit of the Western education for their girls, and are opening up schools where they can get even a higher education. The following, taken from a missionary letter sent from China, will indicate the plans that are being matured by the Chinese for the education of their daughters: "It has been proposed and planned by some of the leading officials of China to found a school at Shanghai for Chinese girls and women, which is to grow into a university for training teachers for girls' schools all over China. The founders propose to guarantee liberty of conscience and opportunity for religious teaching and Sabbath observance. They plan to deal directly with foot-binding, concubinage, and girl slavery." Leading lady missionaries, and some thoroughly educated Chinese Christian young women, have been invited to accept positions as instructors in this school. Verily China does move!

The girls' day-schools being established in different cities and villages, and the corps of native Bible-

readers becoming large, and these workers being scattered over extensive districts, made it necessary that certain lady missionaries should be appointed to superintend these important lines of work, and also give special attention to evangelistic work among the women. The superintending of the girls' day-school and deaconess work being done by the lady missionary evangelists has come to be classified as "evangelistic work." These evangelists make tours over large districts, examining the day-school scholars, giving special instruction and counsel to the teachers and Bible-readers, and, together with the latter, visiting and holding religious services with women and girls that are hid away from the faces of men. These workers meet many obstacles. One lady evangelist says: "Now and then we come to a home where we are very warmly received, not only as visitors but as messengers. . . . The women are so eager to be taught that it is difficult to get away from them. Being new in the work, I was delighted at their eagerness to hear and equally surprised to find the doors shut against us on our next visit. Personally I believe some of these women were in earnest, but I think that they showed their interest too plainly, and so were not allowed to see us again. In one house a woman was able

to conceal her interest until she had been taught again and again, and had gotten quite a hold of the gospel, and then her husband found it out and beat her, and kept the door always shut against us."

This same lady gives us another bit of her experience that shows how this evangelistic work is done: "A woman invited me into her cottage, and added as I followed, 'I care very much to listen.' She listened a long time, asking questions where my meaning was not clear. She said, 'If all you say is true, my kitchen god is useless; nothing but a piece of colored paper; I might as well destroy it.' I quite agreed and suggested that there was no time like the present, so she brought and dstroyed it in my presence. I thanked God and took courage. Since then she has sent me her *Kwoen-diah* (spirit money for merit making) which she supposed to be worth $1,000 each, saying they were worthless and I could have them." The following will illustrate how the native workers are regularly drilled for their work. "There is one part of my duty I have not mentioned, and that is, daily instructing the Bible-women. With those who have been employed for years, and are diligent, careful Bible-readers, this is not necessary. . . . We devote the greater part of each morning to reading the Bible together,

and trying to get clear and intelligent notions of its teachings. To me this is a very pleasant employment, and I trust will be useful to them."

Possibly no Christian work is more fruitful of good than that which is being done by these lady evangelists and their native helpers.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHAT IS BEING DONE FOR THEIR CHRISTIANIZATION?—Continued.

FOUNDLING Homes have been established by the missionary women of nearly all the Christian denominations working in "Inner Land." The Roman Catholics were first to commence this benevolent movement that has for its object the rescuing of baby girls from the sudden and cruel death to which their own parents have assigned them. For some unaccountable reason this charitable work of the Roman Catholics was greatly misunderstood by the Chinese. The slanderous report went abroad that the waifs were cruelly treated; that the foreigners scooped out their eyes and used them to manufacture medicine. It was commonly reported that the foundlings were not only treated in that way, but that the Roman Catholics spirited away children from villages and cities to supply their foreign medicine factories. If a child were lost or carried off by wolves, suspicion immediately rested upon the kind-hearted Roman missionaries, and frequently a riot followed. The

Roman orphanages, as well as the other Roman Catholic missionary buildings, are usually inclosed in walled compounds. The somber walls cast a mysterious aspect over the Foundling Homes. The people, being shut out, and not knowing what is going on within the inclosure, surmise that the rumors are true. These surmisings breed hatred, and frequently this hatred is not satisfied until the Foundling Homes are reduced to ashes.

When the Protestants commenced work in China they found that the orphan-rescue work was in such ill repute among the Chinese that they were loath to take it up. At first the waifs were rescued and placed in the families of Chinese, who were willing to care for them if they were paid for so doing. This plan proved to be too great a financial burden; consequently, Foundling Homes were quietly opened, and the rescue work became a part of the regular program of the woman's missionary movement. A representative of this noble line of Christian endeavor says:

"The Foundling Rescue Home is another work which has grown up and taken so good a footing that it would be a difficult matter, indeed, to dispense with it now. It is a work that needs to be carefully watched and guarded, lest by any means one of the

Mary Crook Memorial Orphanage, Foochow.

scandalous reports, which those who hate us are so ready to circulate, should be started from some really preventable cause. So far as I can see, everything is done that can be done to guard against suspicion. The babies are nursed outside by Chinese foster-mothers till they are over a year old, for which the said foster-mother is paid the usual price given by the natives when they require the same service for some treasured baby boy (alas! baby girls are not worth enough for that in the eyes of the heathen Chinese); viz., a dollar a month. When the baby is over a year old, it comes into the Home. A foreign lady has charge of the Home. The house is always open to visitors; nothing is concealed in any way; we are and must always be, ready to do anything that tends to disarm suspicion. In spite of the carefulness of the missionaries, evil rumors have at different times been circulated against foundling rescuers. Once an evil report was circulated about a certain orphanage. The Christians took it up vigorously, and having traced it home to a young student in the city, compelled him to make an apology and spend a fixed sum on the charitable work of buying coffins for poor people left unburied for lack of money." Many girl babies have been rescued from the hands of their would-be murderous parents and

brought to these Homes, tended, reared, and educated, and have become affectionate wives and mothers in native Christian homes, or Bible-readers and schoolteachers, who spend their whole time in Christian work.

Efforts are put forth, not only to rescue infant girls that have been cast off by their Confucian parents, but the Christian missionaries are endeavoring to overthrow the cruel footbinding custom that makes life a continuous torture to the females that are allowed to live. It is so difficult for people who have never been in China to realize the magnitude of this crime against the gentler sex; or with what tenacity the people, and even the women themselves, cling to the custom.

When the Manchu-Tartars conquered China in 1644 they tried to break up the footbinding custom, but failed. They could impose the cue (which was wholly a Tartar custom) upon the Chinese men as a badge of loyalty to the Manchu dynasty; but they could not stop the bandaging of feet among the women. Manchu-Tartar ladies have natural feet. Girls and women that enter Christian schools, and especially those that become Christians, are expected to unbind their feet. By most of the Christian Churches, unbinding is made absolutely obligatory

upon all females that join the Church, unless the bones of the feet have been broken, in which cases the feet can not be unbound. By tract-literature, by preaching, by house-to-house instruction, and by teaching in the schools, this custom is being gradually undermined. A lady missionary gives the following account of the unbinding of a little girl's feet: "Her feet had been tightly bound for at least four years, but we obtained leave to free them. As I was taking off the bands of cloth one evening, some of the other little girls were near. At the sight of the deformed members, one exclaimed, 'This kind of feet is the devil's invention.' Then, looking at her own, which were unbound a year or so ago, she said, 'Now I have God-made feet.' To which the others echoed, 'And so have I, and so have I.' Little Chu-Lan was very patient; she suffered a good deal from inflammation for a week or two, but she is now able to use her feet as God intended she should."

An evangelistic lady gives her experience as follows: "At first, of course, my words fell upon heathen ears, and had little effect, if any; but as I gathered a Sabbath class, and gained the love of the women, I was soon cheered by seeing one and another gradually loosening the bandages; after a time they would show me how much larger the new pair

of shoes had to be made, and some young wives with Christian husbands continued to enlarge until their shoes were fully two inches longer than when they began. With the old women we had to be content with loosening the bandages more gradually."

The study of the Word sometimes leads the people to unbind their feet, as the following incident related by a lady missionary shows: "I was most gratified when a dear woman came from one of the out stations to be baptized, bringing some children with her. . . . I urged on her consideration the duty of Christians about unbinding, when she interrupted me by saying, 'O, teacher, I knew what you would say; but see, there is no need. See! our feet are only covered with stockings.' Deeply thankful, I drew from her the following story: 'My husband was reading one evening at worship about the Good Shepherd, and how kind and tender the Lord Jesus was. I listened well, for they were such sweet words. In the night I lay awake, and the story filled my mind, when suddenly I remembered that next morning was my customary time for bathing and tightening the bandages of our children's feet. O, I thought, what grief will their cries cause the loving heart of Jesus! Can I, too, cause them pain and not sin against God? I had

no peace then until I made up my mind that next day I would begin to unbind, and continue until we should need only stockings. We use no bandages now.' In this family were three fine healthy girls, and one of twelve who was adopted for the son's wife."

As a rule, it is difficult to make the people understand the sinfulness of the custom and get them to consent to unbind. Sometimes, when the women unbind their feet, their husbands will beat them severely and compel them to rebind. Many parents will take their daughters out of school rather than have their feet unbound. Even Christian mothers sometimes have severe struggles with their pride before they can consent to have their daughters' feet unbound. To have large feet means, frequently, to be classed with the Tartars, laboring women, bondwomen, or courtesans. How humiliating such treatment would be! Take the following illustration: "A woman from an old and respected family, who bears herself with the dignity and complacency of a queen, gave herself and her family to God. She brought her two daughters a distance of four hundred miles to put them into school. Being fully convinced that footbinding is a sin against the Creator and his children, she ex-

pected to have her daughters' feet unbound. The shoes and stockings were brought forth, and the process of unbinding was begun. Then, to the surprise of those who beheld, and probably to the surprise of the old lady herself, a struggle set up in the mother's heart—a struggle between the force of old customs and prejudices and the power of the new faith. Though at first she smiled in happy resignation, and said, 'God's will be done; let the feet be unbound,' a moment later some power from the past caught away the smile, and left a face twitching with emotion and furrowed by slow tears. With sighs and wringing of hands, she walked across the floor to return and beg, 'Unbind only the feet of one, and let the other child's feet remain as they are.' Then reproving herself, she took up her restless walking. Finally she stood still and said, with sober, earnest face, 'Go on. It shall be done.' Thus ended one of the many contests brought on by the contact of a heathen practice with Christian principle."

This mother knew that her daughters would have to suffer the jeers and scoffs of derisive relatives and neighbors; hence the desperate struggle in her breast. Heathen parents, as a rule, prefer to have their daughters suffer untold agony with their

cramped-up feet rather than have them lose standing in society.

A little girl was brought to the mission hospital to be treated for ulceration of the feet, caused by footbinding. The case had gone too far and the little creature died. "This poor girl's mother had bound her feet at the age of six, and after some time the toes ulcerated and began to suppurate, and one or two fell off. This was not heeded at first; the child being encouraged to wish for very small feet, and the loss of some of the toes making it a certainity, she could expect to secure a wealthy husband and a life of ease, eventually. The ulceration spread, however, and for years she had to bear torment, until at last, unable to stand on her feet, she took to her bed. The parents, trying native medicines without effect, went to the foreign doctor. From the first a cure was seen to be impossible. Amputation was the only prospect of saving life, and, with this end in view, she was kept in the hospital some weeks and carefully nourished. Notwithstanding every effort she became gradually weaker (the operation could not be performed), and finally blood-poisoning and delirium intervened till she passed away in great agony. In her delirium she cried: 'Mother, mother,

do n't beat me. I will be good. Save life! Bitter! bitter! exceeding bitter! O my feet! Pain, pain, unceasing pain! Do n't bind so tight mother.' With these piercing words upon her lips she passed away."

A lady missionary doctor tells of a sad case: "One morning a girl about twelve years of age was brought to me. By the penetrating odor which encompassed her it was very easy to realize that there were forces in and around her somewhere, working in inverse order. Her friends, who, judging from appearances, were in good circumstances, said she was a native of Foochow, had had her feet bound in Canton, and they feared the bandaging had been too tight and that the feet were not doing properly; at any rate, not so well as they wished. Would I be kind enough to examine them, and see if their surmises were not correct? I certainly would, but not with pleasure; that odor and pleasure being incompatible. One of the feet fell off when the bandages were unloosened. With the other it was necessary to sever some of the ligaments. The stumps are similar to those of a Symes amputation."

The foregoing are not isolated cases. Many girls lose their feet, and not infrequently their lives, in the endeavor to bring their lower appendages

into the smallest compass possible. The girls that unbind have much to endure. Returning from the mission schools with large feet, they attract much attention. Many things, hard to bear, are said against them, and even called after them in the streets of their native village. As a rule they bear these insults bravely.

All missionaries and native pastors take part in the crusade against dwarfing the feet; but the missionary ladies having the general oversight of the Christian work among the women and girls of China, are the special leaders in the movement. The outlook is most encouraging. Not only is the missionary army making a bold, determined attack upon the custom, but many of the literati, even some who are not Christians, are taking the matter up more and more, giving to it their names, their time and their money. The anti-footbinding workers, missionaries, native Christians and non-Christians, are organized into a society which has for its object the utter eradication of this cruel custom.

A Chinese official at Foochow has issued a proclamation against footbinding, forbidding the expenditure of money on the custom. Viceroy Chang Chi-tung has written an introduction to an anti-foot-binding tract. The movement is thus spreading

among the literati and official families as well as among the more lowly classes. Since the Chinese Court has returned to Peking, the Empress Dowager has cast her influence in favor of the anti-foot-binding crusade. She has gone so far as to issue an edict against foot-binding. This work, that was taken up and pushed with Christian earnestness by the faithful lady missionaries, has grown in strength and influence, and bids fair to sweep the torturous custom from the "Flowery Land."

The medical work carried on by the Woman's Foreign Missionary Societies among the girls and women has developed into one of the greatest Christianizing influences in China. The suffering females shut in from the healing art as administered by the male medical missionaries were allowed to languish, pine away, and die rather than receive the curative remedies from the hand of man. The lady doctors find ready access to the female apartments of many ladies from which even the lady evangelists are excluded. Hospitals are established, and native females are educated as nurses and doctors. An excellent corps of Chinese assistants are to be found in nearly every hospital. Some of the assistants, after careful training under medical missionaries, are sent to America and Europe to perfect

themselves in their profession. Thus the Chinese are being prepared to take care of their own sick.*

The medical work has frequently opened the way into neighborhoods and families for the evangelistic workers. A missionary says: "I remember that when I was endeavoring to establish a station in the interior city of Hang-Chow, and the people were regarding me with considerable prejudice and suspicion, one day, while I was speaking to a crowd in the street, a soldier forced his way toward me, and addressing me very cordially and respectfully, pointed to a deep scar on his cheek. He said that he had once been severely wounded in battle, and that in the hospital in Shanghai, Dr. —— had dressed and healed his wounds and saved his life. Another man in the same company said that he had received similar kindness from Dr. —— in Ningpo. Both testified that in the hospital they were taught the same doctrine that I was preaching. Hundreds and thousands such as these are scattered along the coast and in some of the interior provinces, and are constantly bearing testimony in our favor."

Connected with the hospitals are chapels where a Bible-woman reads and explains the Scriptures

*See Frontispiece—a picture of Dr. Hü King Eng, who has charge of one of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society's Hospitals at Foochow.

to the people that come to be treated. Many who come simply to be healed of some bodily disease receive healing of the soul by the Great Physician. Frequently the missionaries find an unexpected but joyous welcome in new communities, because some persons who had been healed in the hospitals have returned to their homes and told their neighbors and relatives of the medical skill and kindness of the foreigners and especially of the Physician of Souls. They back up their statements by showing that though they were once sick they are well, and though they were once blind now they see. These object lessons of Christian kindness, medical skill, and healing grace prepare the way for the establishing of Christian Churches in the neighborhoods. A medical lady gives the following account: "During the year . . . interesting trips have been made into the country. The first one was made by Miss —— and myself to the capital of the province to attend the wife of an officer. We brought her home with us, and while here undergoing treatment she studied the Bible every day and enjoyed it very much. Later, when she returned home, she recovered completely, and now two of her sons are in the mission school. Her husband gave $100 for the

dispensary, . . . and he said he would help us in raising money for the hospital."

The wife of Li Hung Chang, China's greatest statesman, was as gracious and kind as she was clever. Unlike most Chinese wives, she was a real helpmate to her husband. "She was treated during a critical sickness by a medical missionary lady, and an intimate friendship grew up between them. Lady Li established a hospital in Tientsin, and she was instrumental in establishing charities for the poor."

The foregoing instances show how the medical work unlocks the doors of the homes of the higher classes and admits the lowly Nazarene. The following shows how the prejudices of the people are overcome by medical work:

"One woman, who had a very interesting history, came to our dispensary, and we asked her if she could not come to the hospital for regular treatment; but she was too timid to come, and staid away for several days, and when she did return she was persuaded to remain, and soon came to trust us and to confide in us. She said her husband was a Christian and she had persecuted him, and hated foreigners, and believed all the bad things she had heard of foreigners. . . . It was beautiful

to watch the unfolding of her faith, and she came to understand and believe in the one true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. She manifested her love by her many deeds of kindness to the other patients."

A lady doctor was opening up a new medical work. Before she had received her supply of surgical instruments a man came to have a finger amputated. (Men will come to the lady physicians, but they will not allow the male physicians to doctor their wives.) The doctor says: "Though I had no bandage to control hemorrhage; no one to give him anæsthetics; no instruments save those of my pocket case; yet he bravely sat down by my table and without a groan allowed me to perform the operation. I had to call my cook-boy to assist me, as my student was too frightened to render any help. It was not remarkable that the finger, despite a skin-graft, was slow of healing. He came nearly every day for dressing for months. During that time he was learning much of soul disease, and, as a result of prayer and teaching, has become a Christian, and will soon receive baptism. His gratitude, as he solely had to support his aged mother, who nearly starved while he was incapacitated for work, was unbounded."

Elizabeth Skelton Danforth Hospital, Kiukiang.

Both sexes are thus reached by these noble female medical missionaries. No class of workers are doing more for the evangelization of the "Central Flowery Land" than the lady missionaries in their functions of teachers, evangelists, and doctors. The work being done by Woman's Foreign Missionary Society ladies is greatly supplemented by the efforts of the wives of missionaries sent out by other Boards. These married ladies go to the expense of hiring servants to care for their children, and to do most of their household work, that they may devote as much time as possible to missionary work. They thus frequently save the missionary society the expense of sending out and supporting an extra missionary. I know of one such lady that had the general oversight of three Bible-readers, a women's school, girls' school, and eight girls' day-schools. The united efforts of Christian women working along all these lines have brought multiplied thousands of the women of the Middle Kingdom to the Christian churches, and thousands to sit, like Mary, at the feet of Jesus.

CHAPTER IX.

MRS. SIA AHOK, A CHINESE CHRISTIAN LADY.

A CHINESE merchant in the city of Foochow, by the name of Ahok, was early impressed with the truthfulness of Christianity; but he struggled on in semi-pagan darkness for more than thirty years before he made a full surrender and became a whole-hearted Christian. Business complications were such as to retard his progress into the light. His partners in his vast mercantile interests were heathens; and so complicated were his business entanglements with them that he thought they could not dissolve partnership without bringing more or less financial disaster upon the members of the firm. The heathen partners were loath to sacrifice one-seventh of their weekly trade by closing their places of business on Sunday. Mr. Ahok saw that he could not be a thorough Christian and not observe the Sabbath. Thus he remained undecided for long years. He was always kind to the missionaries, and assisted them, directly or indirectly, financially as well as

by his personal influence. He was among the very first to welcome the new missionaries and invite them to his home to enjoy his hospitality. One lady missionary said: "Very soon after my arrival in China, in 1878, a mandarin called at the schoolhouse to bid me welcome. I was astonished, and asked him why he had called to welcome me to Foochow. 'Because,' he answered, 'you have come to teach my country people about the true God.' 'Are you a Christian?' I asked. 'No,' he said; 'but I like Christianity. I go to church sometimes, and I know the doctrine is true and the preachers are good.' We had a very interesting conversation, and when he left I pressed him to send his wife to see me." This mandarin was Mr. Ahok. In this manner he was accustomed to welcome each new missionary of the Cross that arrived at the "Happy City," as the Chinese call Foochow.

Mr. Ahok put forth many efforts to bring his wife and family under Christian influences. The females of his household were not as favorable to the truth as he was. His own mother and his wife's mother spent much time in his home; they, as well as Mrs. Ahok, had their private apartments well stocked with idols. These high-class ladies were slow to believe that Christians and Christianity were

what they were represented to be. They thought that Christians "talked good, but did not live good." They finally concluded that they would make unexpected calls on the foreign ladies, and study their home life. One day the missionary quoted above was surprised by her servant running in and exclaiming, "Kuniong, the Tai Tai is coming!" (Kuniong means unmarried lady, and Tai Tai is the title of a rich Chinese lady. "Which Tai Tai?" asked the missionary. "Hoke Lee Sing Sang Nyiong," answered the servant. Then chair-coolies were seen, bearing closed sedan-chairs, and crying out as they approached, "Twai a Twai a" (a great person is coming). The sedans were set down, and, continues the lady missionary, "several slave girls and other attendants helped out of their chairs and led in the two ladies. They were Mrs. Ahok and her mother. They had come to luncheon, and did not let me know because they wanted to see an English luncheon without preparation. They staid all afternoon, looking into all my English things and listening to all the matron and I said." The missionary lady was engaged by Mr. Ahok to teach the females of his family. When the school summer vacation came the missionary was again surprised by Mrs. Ahok making the request to be per-

Mrs. Ahok and Maid.

mitted to spend the time with her. "Why do you wish to stay with me?" asked the lady missionary. "O," she answered, "you say all that is nice; I want to come and see if you live as you talk." "But," urged the missionary, "I have only one room and one bed; how can you come?" "O," she answered, "I will send a bed and have it put up in your room, and I will bring my own servant to wait upon me." "She came," said the missionary, "and followed me about everywhere, asking me to translate all my home letters, and all I wrote home. She joined me in prayer night and morning; that is, she listened while I prayed. One night I went to bed with a bad headache, and I could not have family worship. In the middle of the night she heard me awake, and said, 'Is your head better?' 'No,' I answered. 'Then I do not believe in your God,' she said; 'for you worshiped him, and I asked him to make you better.' This led to a profitable conversation on asking according to God's will." Once, while spending some time in Mrs. Ahok's home, this lady missionary noticed that her actions were carefully watched by the mother of her hostess. She said: "Each morning she was in the room before I dressed. Each day I endeavored to be before her and failed, until one day I arose in the dark and then she refused

to leave for her breakfast. I wondered why she wanted so much to see me dress. The morning was wearing away. At last she said, 'Are you not going to pray this morning?' 'Yes,' I answered, 'I have prayed.' 'And you did not let me see you,' she said, in an aggrieved tone. 'Why,' I asked, 'do you wish to see me pray?' 'O, it is so very funny,' she replied. 'You pray to nothing. How can nothing hear you?' Here was a lovely opportunity, and so I went on telling of our God, who is a spirit pervading everywhere with his presence, seeing all we do, hearing all we say. She listened with rapt attention."

It was found no easy task to teach the women. One day, when the Bible-lesson was about the Good Shepherd, and the missionary was comparing her pupils to sheep that needed the care of the Good Shepherd, they seemed greatly amused. "What is the matter?" asked the missionary. "Why," they said, "you say we are as sheep, and we have no wool on our backs, and we have not four legs." The missionary tried again, and told them of our utterly lost condition, and how Jesus left his heavenly home to come to seek us like a shepherd would seek a lost sheep. Then they laughed outright, and when asked the cause, they said, "O, Kuniong, you are

wrong to-night; we are not lost; we are all at home." The faithful missionary did not lose heart. Although her lady pupils were somewhat over-inquisitive, and, from a Western standpoint, even impudent in inquiring into her private home life, and seemed at times disrespectful, yet she could see that a favorable impression was being made.

Mr. Ahok had finally surrendered himself to the Savior. On one of his business trips to Hong-Kong he made up his mind to unite with the Church, which he did. When he returned to Foochow he identified himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was greatly worried because his partners objected to closing the places of business on the Sabbath. After much prayer and godly counsel from the missionaries, he gained the victory. With the beginning of the New Year the stores were closed. He also commenced a weekly prayer-meeting for the benefit of the employees. Mr. Akok wrote as follows concerning his Sabbath closing and his religious devotions: "My two stores are closed on Sundays from the beginning of the Chinese New Year. I continue to have Wednesday meetings in my store, and Friday meetings at my residence, and I hope God will lead me aright." Mr. Ahok took great interest in the work being done for the religious in-

struction of the women of his family. Once the missionary called on him to close the Bible-study with prayer. He did, and he prayed very plainly for each one present. A part of his prayer was like this: "O, God Almighty, for Jesus thy Son's sake, look down on my mother. She has one hundred idols, and her heart is so hard. Make her soft to worship thee, for she is nearly eighty years old. There is my wife, too. She has been learning about thee, but she does not want to give up her idols, and she does not worship thee; make her a changed heart. Then her mother, she reads thy Word, but she does not believe in thee. My oldest son's wife is very hard; she will not trust thee." Thus he mentioned each by name. That prayer was answered in the very near future. To be childless is a great affliction for a Chinese wife. Such was the condition of Mrs. Ahok. Mr. Ahok's first wife was a mother of sons; hence she was held in great honor. One day when Mrs. Ahok was receiving her regular Bible-lesson she seemed very sad. The missionary asked her the cause of her sorrow. She said, "O, Kuniong, I am so unhappy; I am not head in my own house. You know here in China, 'without children without honor.' Mr. Ahok's first wife had children. She died, then Mr. Ahok married me. I have been his

wife twelve years, and he wants me to rule, and I can not because I have no child. Would not your God give me one? Did he ever give any one a son?" The missionary turned to the story of Hannah, and read it, and said, "It is true; God can do all things; and we are told to make our request known to him." Then they knelt, and Mrs. Ahok led in prayer for the first time. She said, "O, God, Jehovah, I come to thee, now; help me not to doubt; teach me this good doctrine; give me thy Holy Spirit, and please give me a son for Jesus' sake. Amen."

The prayer was answered, and the Ahok family was brightened by the advent of a son. He was known as "the Christian-Doctrine Boy." Mrs. Ahok ceased to worship idols. She said, "I can no longer worship idols, but I do not know how to be a true Christian; I must pray to be taught." There was great rejoicing in the Ahok family. Mr. Ahok wrote concerning the third day of festivities as follows:

"I was very busy yesterday receiving presents from my friends, and attending my guests. I had a dinner party last evening. It is a Chinese custom that, three days after the birth of a baby in the family, the friends and relatives make presents of chickens and vermicelli for the baby's mother to eat; and the families have to give dinners to their

friends in returning thanks for their presents. I received a great many chickens and vermicelli. I think if Mrs. Ahok could eat all of them, she would become twice larger than she is now."

After the missionary teacher had returned to England, Mr. Ahok wrote her a letter in which he reported the following good news: "I am happy to tell you that on the 18th of June last my mother (eighty years old), wife, and brother, and his wife, were baptized, and I hope that they will carry on Christian work, and be worthy, true, and earnest Christians." Mrs. Ahok's own account of her conversion is as follows:

"I never thought of God, nor had any desire after him, but, in his great love and mercy, he had compassion on me, and sent one of his servants to me to my own home. . . . At first I could not understand her message, and my heart was all darkness; but by and by the light began to shine. It was as you have often seen at sunrise, first a faint light, when nothing is seen distinctly; then the sun itself appears, and in a flood of light all is clear. So it was in my heart when Christ came in; all my doubts and fears vanished, and I found a joy and peace I never knew before. But my difficulty then was to confess that I was a follower of the Lord

Jesus, a member of the despised band of Christians. I thought I would rather die than acknowledge it, and was tempted to think I might worship Christ in secret. But this also I took to the Savior, and told him my weakness and fear of confessing I was his servant, and," she added with her face all aglow, "he took it all away, and I now feel neither fear nor shame, and it is my greatest joy to go to the houses of my rich friends, and plead with them to give up their idols, and find the same peace that I have found in serving God."

Mrs. Ahok gave her strength to work among the wealthy, because, being a rich woman of high standing herself, she could find access to the "high-class" women when the common Bible-reader and foreign missionary were frequently excluded. She was also kind and generous to the poor. A letter that she wrote to a missionary teacher who had much to do with leading her to Christ will show the peculiar traits of this godly Chinese lady.

"Foochow, February 16, 1888.

"My Dear Mrs. Fagg,—Many thanks for your letter and the book and cards, which you so kindly think of me to send them, and gave me. I am so

Note.—This letter is not changed from the form in which it came from Mrs. Ahok's pen.

sorry that I could not write and thank you before this, as I had not the time, and learned little English; but I am so thankful and glad that Mrs. Sing is staying with me for the Chinese New Year. She helped me to write this letter to you. I had very bad sore eyes last month. I could not see or do anything, but very thankful to say that I am so much better now; not quite well yet. I must put on spectacles. I can not read any letters without them. This is the Chinese New Year. You are very often in my thoughts, and often think of your goodness and kindness to me and to Charley; when he was very ill you took care and nursed him well. I never forget it. When are you coming back to Foochow again? I should like to see you, hoping you will come here some day for a change if you could. Mrs. Stewart, Mrs. Sing, and some of the ladies used to go with me to the city to visit the rich people, and tell them of the great love of God to sinners. They all were very nice and attentive to hear, but they have not made up their minds to believe. Also used to visit the houses near my house, and also to Po-Na-Sang, too. We pray God to open their eyes that they may see Jesus as their Savior, who came to save them. I hope I shall be able to work again after the Chinese New Year, if nothing happens.

"I dare say you have heard about my mother. She has been baptized last year. She sends her love to you. She comes here very often to the prayer-meeting, and also to the service on Sundays.

She very often thinks of you, and should like to see you, too. My children—Charley and Jimmy—go to the Sunday-school now every Sunday. I asked a Christian teacher to teach them last year in my house. They learned the Bible picture-book, and they know some of the stories from the first to the thirtieth picture quite well. My second daughter-in-law and her husband have been disgraced, and disbehaved themselves. I am quite grieved about them. They have gone from my house, which I am sorry to say. My second daughter-in-law was very ill last year. She wished to be baptized, and was baptized, but was very sorry what happened with her now. Please, will you kindly pray for her and her husband, that they may see of their own sins, and come back again to God? If they are humble to him, he will not turn them away. My eldest daughter-in-law is very hard-hearted; she was exhorted by many friends, and prayed for, but she has not made up her mind to believe in the Lord Jesus as her Savior; I am very sorry for her; but we pray God to open her eyes that she may some day come out boldly to confess the Lord Jesus, and trust him as her Savior. Last Conference, Misses Newcombe invited me to stay with them for a week. I went to the meeting every day. I walked over with them to go, and to come back six times a day, and I did not feel tired or hurt my feet at all; I feel quite well and strong, and was much refreshed. I enjoyed it very much. My little boy Jimmy went

with me, too, to stay with the Newcombes; he went to the meeting, and heard about giving up wine, so he has given up wine now. He bought a button, which has a Chinese character—Kai-Chin. If anybody invited him to the feast and gave him wine, he would say, 'No, I have given up wine.' I hope he will keep it all the days of his life.

"I am very sorry to tell you that Mr. Stewart is not well yet. I am afraid if he is not well he will go to England, and we shall be so sorry to lose them. Last March Mr. Ahok went to Singapore, to Hong-Kong, to Amoy, and Formosa, all about five months. He went to the jail and prison to teach to the heathens about the gospel of Christ. While he was in Singapore he had very nice times there. Last night Mr. Ahok started to Hong-Kong for some engagements; he said that he would be back in a fortnight. Dr. Corey is going home soon, as she is very ill.

"I am going to tell you about the great marriage of the son of the richest man in Formosa to the great-granddaughter of the great mandarin in Foochow, whose grave so many people used to see, near the recreation-ground. It is a very beautiful, big grave. His great-granddaughter married the richest man's son in Formosa. He came to Foochow to be married. It was a very grand wedding. I never saw such a wedding. It was a very great crowd of people; thousands of people went to see the bride, whether rich or poor. The bride had to stand on

the table, where the people could see her. Some of the chairs and benches broke down on account of the crowd of people, who knocked about and made such a rouse; but the headman of the wedding did not say anything, lest they would make an uproar. This custom is that any people can go and see. They went to see the bride from 7 to 11 o'clock at night. The headman was very good and patient. He dared not say a word to make the people angry or send them away. About four hundred people carried the tablets and the bride's presents, just like they carried procession. Some of the missionary ladies should like to go and see the bride, but they would not allow it, as they are so afraid that many of the Chinese will come and see, too, and to make a rouse again, in case they should get some troubles. They said, before they go back to Formosa, that they will come out to my house, and invite some of the ladies to come and see the bride; I wish you went to see her. Last Wednesday the bride's mother-in-law came to wish me a happy New Year. She will come again before they go away, and stay here on their way to Formosa. This lady knows about the Bible. She says it is a good doctrine. Some of the missionaries in Formosa gave her some books and Bible to read. I talked to her about this religion. She seemed very nice about it. The prayer-meeting of Friday evening, held in the house by you, we still keeping it now, and we have it every Friday. The American Church appointed Mr. Sia,

one of the Chinese clergymen, to go to America to tell the people there about the work here; so Mr. Sites goes with him to America to translate it for him. The Church appointed Mr. Ahok to go, but he can not leave his work, so they asked Mr. Sia to go instead of him. I heard you have four daughters; you are quite rich with daughters. Please give my kind regards to Mr. Fagg and to yourself.

"Yours affectionately,

"SIA AHOK."

Mrs. Ahok, in accordance with the earnest solicitation of the English missionaries, went to England to plead with the Christians of that land to send more missionaries to help rescue the perishing women of China. The visit and addresses of this noble woman created a profound impression wherever she went throughout the United Kingdom. The following extract from one of her addresses should appeal to the hearts of all lovers of humanity:

"Since I have been here, what has struck me more than anything is, that the women of England have such wonderful blessings from God. I see them go out, even at night; I think they must be very strong. As I see the blessings that they enjoy, it makes my heart still more pity China. I am

anxious to tell you something about my country-women. Many here may know it already, but I should like to remind those who do not, that in China there is the cruel custom of binding women's feet, and it makes it almost impossible for them to leave their own houses or to walk outdoors. I myself have bound feet, and it is extremely difficult for me to move about. You may ask how I was able to come to England. It is solely trusting in God's great power. I have heard some people say that I am come to England for pleasure; but I do not think there can be much pleasure in coming as I have done. That long journey alone is enough to make one cry. My one thought is to get back to my own country as quickly as I can, after doing the duty which God has called me to do. Since I have been here these two months, I have never once been out for my own amusement; but every day I have had some opportunity of speaking to people about the needs of the Chinese women, and that is all my heart desires.

"One thing especially filled my heart with pity as I think of my sisters in China,—the time of their death. I have myself been with those who are passing out of the life into the unknown darkness; they murmur that they see evil spirits coming for

them, and say, 'I see this and that other spirit,' so that one attendant dare not stay in the room alone with them; there must be five or six people. They say the evil spirits are filling the room, and coming to take away that poor soul. Sometimes, as the watchers beside the dying hear the cry of an owl, of which they have great fear in China, they think it is the messenger from the other world, calling the soul of the departing one. The reason of this terrible dread and anguish of mind is that they do not know the love of God, but worship evil spirits. Many of them, when they are very, very ill indeed, do not ask the doctor to give them medicine, but send and inquire at the idol temples what medicine should be taken. If a man is very ill indeed, they send to the great temple at Foochow, and pray to seven or eight idols for his recovery. These things ought to fill your heart with compassion.

"I will give you a few words of my own experience. Some years ago I worshiped idols, just as these women do now, and seemed to be quite under the power of the idols; but now, thanks to God's great mercy, he has delivered me. My husband's mother, who had also become a Christian, died about two years ago; her death was perfect peace, so different

from that I told you just now of the heathen's death-bed. As we sat in the room with her, we asked her if she was afraid, and her answer was, 'It is all peace,' and so she passed away to be with her Savior."

Mr. Ahok was greatly pleased to have his wife visit England in the interest of Christian missions in China. But a sad experience was to come to him and his. Before his loved companion returned from her journey in the interests of her country-women he heard the call of the Master, "Come up higher." As soon as Mrs. Ahok heard of her husband's sickness she turned her face homeward. She returned to China by the way of Canada, which is the shortest route; but she was too late. One of the native workers asked Mr. Ahok a short time before his death, "Is your heart at peace?" He said, "Yes." Again the native Christian said, "Be anxious for nothing." He said, "No; it is the will of God." He, in this state of mind, sank peacefully to rest. His Christian life was full of good works. One of the greatest acts of his life was the founding of the Anglo-Chinese College at Foochow. He gave $10,000 to this noble work. A fine property, that must have cost $25,000 originally, was offered for sale. This property was purchased

with the $10,000, and donated to the Methodist Episcopal Church for college purposes. Over two hundred and fifty Chinese youths are now enrolled in the school, and it is doing most excellent Christian work.

It would have been a great comfort in his last moments to have had his loved wife with him, but he did not murmur. He said, "I leave her to God." Mrs. Ahok did not learn of his death until on the house-boat on her way up the river from the steamer anchorage. Dr. Sites (who had been the one missionary of all others in whom Mr. Ahok trusted the most) tenderly broke the sad news to her. "She sat like a statue for some time, then utterly broke down."

Everything was done to comfort her that could be done by both missionaries and native Christians. She frequently said between her sobs, "If I could only see him once more, and tell him all I have done in England!" Since the death of her husband, Mrs. Ahok has given her whole time to Christian work among the rich and official families of Foochow. The life of this gentle Christian Bible-reader is "like ointment poured forth." She sheds fragrance wherever she goes.

The Ahok homestead consisted of two large

dwelling-houses; one, a native structure, furnished entirely according to the Chinese style; the other is a foreign building, elegantly furnished with the best of Brussels carpet, sofas, easy-chairs, pictures, bookcases, bric-a-brac, and other fine foreign furniture, as well as exceptionally fine specimens of Chinese porcelain and lacquer. Mrs. Ahok, in her great zeal for the Christianization of the high-class ladies, set apart her handsome foreign residence for a school in which these representatives of the Chinese elite might receive a Christian education.

CHAPTER X.

THE CHINESE EMPRESS DOWAGER.

THE empress dowager, who is now practically the Empress of China, was not a slave-girl in her childhood, as was commonly reported by newspaper correspondents. Neither was she the daughter of a Canton candy-huckster, who by her uncommon beauty attracted the attention of a passing officer. Through this officer a knowledge of her beauty first reached the ear of Emperor Hien-fung. The "Son of Heaven," so says the story, sent for her, and she became a member of his harem, then second wife, and finally Empress of China. These romantic stories are doubtless products of the highly-imaginative minds of some globe-trotters.

Dr. W. A. P. Martin, ex-president of Tung-wen College at Peking, says her father's family was Manchu-Tartar, and "of noble blood." Mr. W. E. Curtis, writing about the empress says, "She is the daughter of a Manchu soldier, who was a Tautai, or governor at Wuhu." Thus these pretty romances must be given up and prounounced apocryphal, for

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there is no better authority on "things Chinese" than Dr. Martin.

Many girls in China are not considered worth naming. They are simply numbered; but the little bundle of female humanity that was to be the ruler of 400,000,000 people was given a name. She was called Tszchi Toanyu Kanghi Chuangeheng Chinhien Chung Sih. No wonder she became a great woman, if there is anything in a name.

Being a Tartar, her feet were never bound. When a girl her complexion was sub-olive, and her eyes and hair were a dull black. Emperor Hien-fung chose her for his second wife. His first wife being childless, when Tszchi presented him with a son, he was so overjoyed that he broke custom and advanced her to the position of empress, the real legal empress retaining, nominally, precedence. The empresses occupied separate palaces. That of Tszchi was known as the West Palace, while the childless queen, whose name was Tsi An, occupied the East Palace.

Emperor Hien-fung fled into exile when the English and French armies approached Peking during the second "Chinese war." He died while he was hiding from his European enemies. The capital city was taken, and the beautiful summer

palace was pillaged. When the death of the emperor became known, two ambitious "princes of the blood" took possession of the boy king, the son of Tszchi, and became his self-appointed guardians. They tried to reconcile the queen mothers (one the legal mother and the other the real mother of the youthful heir to the throne) by proclaiming them joint regents during the minority of the little emperor. Prince Kung, an uncle of the boy sovereign, challenged the authority usurped by the self-appointed guardians, Su Shun and Toan-hoan, and had them decapitated, for he believed, as did the queen regents, that they intended to make way with the dowager empresses, the prince himself, and possibly the young emperor. The dowager empresses showed their appreciation of this action of Prince Kung by appointing him joint regent with themselves. The prince soon became altogether too officious to suit the queen regents, and they planned to get rid of him. Charges were trumped up against him, the chief of which was that he treated His Majesty, the emperor (a boy ten years of age) disrespectfully.

Prince Kung was degraded from all his offices, and stripped of his titles. Soon the empresses dowager had it proclaimed that the prince was very

penitent, and had thrown himself prostrate at the feet of the "Son of Heaven," and begged his forgiveness. Then the prince was restored to all his offices save being co-regent, and all his titles were restored to him, and an extra title was thrown in for good measure. The whole thing was a ruse to get rid of Prince Kung as joint regent. Empress Tszchi was undoubtedly the moving spirit in this successful political game. The two widow empresses seemed to get along harmoniously in their unique positions as joint widows and joint regents. They were also sisters. They were exceedingly tender-hearted and generous toward their subjects. During the terrible famine in the Shansi Province they refused to have meat prepared for their households, declaring that they would eat no meat while their subjects were starving. Thus they saved seventy-five dollars daily from their own tables, and turned the money into the famine-fund.

Tszchi had her queenly heart saddened by the death of her son, Tung-Chi, after he had reigned but a short time. A council of princes, led by the mother of the dead emperor, selected Kuang-Hsu, a cousin of Tung-Chi, to succeed to the throne. The empress of the Eastern Palace then adopted Kuang-Hsu as her son, and he ascended the "chair of state,"

April 12, 1875, when he was only four years old, and the empresses dowager continued to act as co-regents. In 1880 the empress of the Eastern Palace died, and Tszchi became absolute in authority as sole regent. This authority she continued to exercise until March 4, 1889, when her ward, having reached the age of eighteen (or, counting him a year old at birth, as the Chinese do, he was nineteen), assumed the reins of government.

For thirty years Tszchi exercised authority as regent in an empire where women are despised. She proved herself to be the ablest ruler China has had since the days of Kien-lung; and undoubtedly the ablest of China's long line of empresses.

Her love for the people and her patriotism have not waned with her age. On her sixtieth birthday her subjects presented her with $10,000,000 as an expression of their esteem. This vast sum she turned into the war fund to help her struggling nation in the short but bloody war with Japan. The Christian women of China remembered the empress dowager on that sixtieth birthday by presenting her with a handsome copy of the New Testament. She received it very graciously. It doubtless created an impression in the palace, for the emperor sent

immediately to the nearest Bible-house and purchased a copy for himself.

When Prince Henry of Prussia was received by the emperor, the hand of the "Son of Heaven" trembled as he shook the palm of the doughty German; but the empress dowager received the prince with the greatest composure, and asked him many intelligent questions. Henry was surprised to find her possessed of such marked mental ability.

The chief advisers of the empress dowager in matters of state during her thirty years' regency were Prince Kung and Li Hung Chang. They doubtless exercised a great influence in court affairs, but Tszchi was far from being clay to be molded at their will. She has a will of her own, and frequently exercised it. From a Chinese standpoint she is a progressive woman. China made slow but steady advancement toward Western ways of doing things during the long period of her regency. Those persons who expected China to adopt Western methods as rapidly as did Japan were prone to be disappointed. The young emperor found out to his sorrow that it is best to make haste slowly in the "Flowery Land." His rashness caused a reaction that greatly delayed the wheels of progress. If he

had been more moderate in pushing his reforms, he might have become the Moses of China, who would have finally liberated his nation from the thralldom of antiquated customs and laws. But by endeavoring to make the sleepy old giant move with the rapidity of a Western mail-train, he aroused the ire of the mandarins. These so-called wise men appealed to Empress Tszchi, and she immediately seized the reins of government, and sent the young emperor into retirement.

The conservative Celestial statesmen wished to receive their instructions from the throne in the good, old-fashioned way—written with the vermillion pencil on yellow paper, and delivered by courtly couriers appointed for that sacred duty by His Majesty, the emperor. To use the foreign devil's telegraph to send these imperial edicts was sacrilegious, even though it saved a month of precious time. The plans of His Majesty, by which he would displace the time-honored system of Confucian education with a system based on foreign ideas, and that taught modern science and philosophy, were considered so revolutionary, and such an insult to China's greatest sage, that they could not be tolerated at all. To grant concession after concession to foreign corporations, allowing them to build railroads, operate

steamship-lines, and develop mechanical industries, would result in throwing thousands of burden-bearers and boatmen out of employment, and would doubtless cause the graves that contained the dust of the Celestial dead to be disturbed. He also issued an edict that Buddhist temples should be used as schoolhouses. Imagine what an uproar there would be if the President (providing he had the authority) would issue an edict that all American churches should be used as schoolhouses! Then, the "Son of Heaven" so forgot his dignity as to mount a bicycle and take a header. In all these things the youthful potentate, in the eyes of the Confucian scholars, greatly erred, and was compelled to practically abdicate in favor of his aunt, the empress dowager. The reaction that caused the downfall of Kuang-Hsu was a sad thing for foreigners in China, and especially for missionary work in that land.

Those that are in a position to know, say that during the nine years that Kuang-Hsu had, to all outward appearances, controlled the affairs of state, Empress Dowager Tszchi was the unseen power behind the throne and dictated the policy of the government. Nearly every important reform movement had her sanction, and it was only when the emperor became uncontrollably rash, and had lost

his influence with the conservative element, and with even the better representatives of the radical element, that Empress Tszchi hastened from her palace at Echo Park, and placed herself at the head of the Celestial Government in the Forbidden City. Being forced by circumstances to take her stand with the Conservatives, she was compelled to execute those advisers that had caused the young emperor to make his so-called blunders. She had the choice of either sending the emperor into retirement and punishing his counselors, or losing her influence with the Conservatives and letting the reins of government slip out of her fingers altogether. She chose the former. When the aggression of foreigners aroused the people, and they inaugurated the Boxer Rebellion, she was charged with being in collusion with the rebels. And possibly she was. When we remember that the Boxer Movement at the first was directed as much against the empress dowager and the Manchu dynasty as against other foreigners in China, then Tszchi's astuteness becomes still more evident. She saw clearly the only way she could save the throne to the Manchus was to coquette with the Boxers, and turn an Anti-Manchu Movement into an Anti-foreign Movement, with herself and the Manchu princes

as leaders. By so doing she was enabled to keep herself in the saddle and a Manchu on the throne. She is charged with duplicity during the reign of terror in Peking. It is said she "both encouraged the Boxers and protected the legations." This was probably true also. If she had not protected the foreign legations, they doubtless would have been swept out of existence in a single week. If she had allowed them to be annihilated, she knew full well that the foreign nations would have dethroned the Manchus, and probably her own life would have been forfeited. If she had not coquetted with the Boxers, and had revealed the fact to them that she was protecting the foreigners, they would have doubtless turned against her, and with the large half of the imperial army that had gone over to the Boxers, they would have defeated the pro-foreign branch of the army, would have killed Emperor Kuang-Hsu, and forced her to take her own life. With wonderful tact she played the foreign and anti-foreign factions against each other, and thus kept the Boxers and the rebel army from concentrating all their energy on the foreign legations, and in this way saved the foreigners, and at the same time retained her influence over the Boxers, and also saved the throne to the Manchus. In a

Bismarck this would be called statesmanship, but in Manchu Tszchi it is called unpardonable duplicity.

When the foreign armies reached Peking, and the empress dowager, emperor, and Chinese court fled in consternation from the city, it was declared that the end had come to Manchu authority in China. Another declaration was that Peking would never be the capital city again; for the fugitive ruler would never return to the Forbidden City after it had been desecrated by the foreign devils. Still another prediction was that the dowager empress would never dare to return to Peking, even if the emperor and his court did. In spite of these predictions, the Manchu dynasty is still in authority, the emperor again occupies his palace in the Forbidden City, and the dowager empress still holds the reins of government. The return of the Chinese court to Peking was the most remarkable episode, in many respects, in the annals of the Manchu dynasty. Thirteen million taels, about $9,100,000 in gold, were spent in preparing the way and paying the expenses of the journey from Hsi-An-fu. A special train of twenty-two cars, decorated with imperial yellow, carried the court from Paoting-fu to the capital city, a distance of but about seventy

miles, while the long journey from Hsi-An-fu was made in sedan-chairs and other antiquated Chinese vehicles. The entrance into the city was more like that of a returning conqueror than a fugitive ruler. The following description of the court's return to Peking was written by Dr. H. H. Lowry:

"The imperial party was carried on special trains on the railway to within two miles of the city wall. There an improvised station had been erected on the spot where the former buildings had been destroyed by the Boxers. Over the platform extended an awning of yellow silk. On one side of the platform were the tents for the accommodation of the emperor and the royal family; and on the other side were the tents for the provincial and metropolitan officials. The road thence to the palace was leveled and covered with fresh yellow earth.

"Inside the city the foreign-drilled troops of Yuan Shih-k'ai lined each side of the street. The soldiers were dressed in heavy marching order, and made a fine appearance.

"The Ch'ien-men great street was crowded with thousands of Chinese; but, unfortunately for them, just before the time appointed for the emperor to pass they were all unceremoniously driven from from the street, and orders were given that all shop-

doors should be closed. It was also expected that all windows would be curtained to prevent the people within being seen, but the execution of this order was easily evaded. A thin gauze covering was placed over the windows, through which the spectators could be as distinctly seen as before.

"After the imperial baggage had passed, followed by the military escort of infantry and cavalry, with General Ma at their head, the first chair to appear was that of Prince Ching, preceded and followed by a large number of attendants on horseback. Shortly afterward the cry was passed along the street by the policemen that the emperor was approaching. The soldiers immediately kneeled and presented arms. It proved to be a false alarm, and after three of the emperor's horses, with yellow saddles and blankets on, had passed, the soldiers and police resumed their upright position.

"As the emperor approached, there was perfect quiet on the street. Soldiers and police were again on their knees. He was borne by eight bearers. The chair was surrounded by an escort of a hundred or so of officials.

"After a suitable interval came the empress dowager, surrounded by a much larger and more imposing cavalcade than accompanied the emperor.

On her left rode Yuan Shih-k'ai, the viceroy of this province, and on her right Ts'en Ch'un-ch'uan, the governor of Shansi. It was reported that the empress dowager entered the city with fear and trembling, not knowing what foul trap the foreigners had laid for her capture, but certainly her face gave no such indication. She was attracted by the faces of so many foreign ladies at the windows of the dispensary, and turned toward them with an expression of the greatest interest.

"Other chairs and carts contained the empress and members of the imperial family, and soon as they passed the crowds of officials and people filled the street from side to side. Often there were six carts abreast, and locomotion was almost impossible.

Inside the circular inclosure of the Ch'ien gate a halt was made, and the emperor entered the shrine of the God of War to worship. The empress dowager worshiped in both the temples—that of the Goddess of Mercy as well as the God of War. She was attracted by the crowds of foreigners on the city wall watching the procession, and she stopped and bowed to them."

In all this display more honor was shown to the dowager empress than to Emperor Kuang-Hsu himself. Before the return it was said that a prop-

osition was being discussed to *allow* the empress dowager to come back to Peking, providing she would take no part in the government, and would agree not to interfere with the authority of the emperor. She would be permitted to live in the summer palace, distant from the emperor, and be given an assured allowance for her support the remainder of her life. But when her excellency concluded to return she asked no one's permission. She now exercises as much authority as she ever did. Some say she has a stronger grasp upon power than ever before. She asserted her supremacy some time ago by granting an audience in the sacred hall in the Forbidden City to the ministers of foreign countries. At this reception the dowager empress occupied the throne, while the emperor sat behind a small table on her right. Chinese officers declare that the empress dowager disapproved of "Boxerism;" that her wishes were overruled by the Boxer leaders, and that her edicts during the rebellion were garbled. All this is hard to believe, yet she showed commendable zeal in suppressing the West China Boxer troubles that raged during the summer of 1902. A few weeks after the return of the Imperial Court, the dowager empress invited the ladies of the foreign legations to visit her in her palace. This in-

Reception of the Foreign Ministers by the Imperial Court.

vitation was accepted, and the reception proved to be an event of great importance, not simply because it was unprecedented in the annals of Chinese history, but because it was a splendid piece of diplomacy. It placed the dowager empress in a more favorable light in the estimation of the Western world, and gave her an excuse for breaking down the wall of seclusion that kept the Manchu and Chinese ladies of princely birth from associating with foreign ladies.

In the wake of this reception came another given by Mrs. Conger, wife of the American minister. Invitations were sent to the Chinese women of noble rank. This move, made by Mrs. Conger, was ridiculed by many of the female members of the other foreign ministers' families. They did not believe the invitations would be accepted.

"The question was: Would or would not the Chinese ladies of noble rank come out of their seclusion and accept an invitation to dine with foreigners? In all the historic millenniums of heaven's empire, no such precedent could be found; but Mrs. Conger sent her invitation, though many of the wise ones laughed. But their laughter was suddenly stopped; for on March 14th a procession of princesses, headed by the yellow palanquin of the princess im-

perial, Yung Shou, adopted daughter of the dowager empress, entered the American legation by appointment, followed by a host of attending eunuchs. Nine princesses of the blood, or wives of princes, a duchess, and a lady interpreter, formed the party. An elaborate tiffin was served by Mrs. Conger, assisted by five American ladies connected with the staff of the legation and four young women missionaries, who acted as interpreters. These Manchu ladies had never before been inside a foreign house, and one of them, it is said, had never before seen a white woman. After Mrs. Conger had proposed the health of the empress, and it had been drunk from the high-lifted teacups, the princess royal delivered a personal message from the dowager, who hoped that her happy relations with the American ladies and with the country they represent would never be severed." (From August *Friend,* 1902.)

We should not judge this remarkable woman by Western or Christian standards of morals or conduct. Her life and actions have been shaped by Confucian standards so far as morals are concerned, but as a woman she has broken through the barriers placed about womankind by the great sage, and has boldly pushed herself to the front until she is without a peer among the women of Chinese history.

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